NORMANBURN.

VOL. II.

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NORMANBURN;

OR,

THE HISTORY

OF

A YORKSHIRE FAMILY.

A Novel.

BY THE

AUTHOR OF HARDENBRASS AND HAVERILL;
OR, THE SECRET OF THE CASTLE,
BERT ROB, OR THE WITCH OF SCOT MUIR, COMMONLY CALLED
MADGE THE SNOOVER, CONIRDAN, OR THE ST. KILDIANS, AND
THE HISTORY OF JULIUS FITZ-JOHN.

Stultitiæ nomine multa tegit.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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NORMANBURN.

BOOK IV.



CHAP. I.

A Soldier and a Philosopher.—The Effects of a Thunder Storm.—And of a Mistake.

Before we accompany Miss Normanburn into the parlour, we must beg leave to attend to what passed in Captain Normanburn's room, and to relate some parts of the conversation between that gentleman and Mr. Middlemist. It began by the Captain declaring, that he was perfectly convinced women were the most unreasonable, perverse, obstinate

part of the creation! that all the woes of his family had originated in women, and that, for his own part, he believed that they would be continued by women.

"Here, Sir," said he to his silent auditor, "all this heat, and noise, and fury, is about an affair, in which I think the honour of my family concerned! and I do believe that good lady, Madam Bleathead, is at the bottom of it, and has persuaded my sister, who is good natured and easy, (here Middlemist nodded his head in assent) to go to her, on the day this fête is to be at Normanburn, to help her to dress, forsooth! But, I vow to God, that she shall not in any way contribute, even in the smallest degree, to the triumph of the enemy, and that I will detain her by force, rather than submit to such a degradation." Here the Captain paused, for he was out of breath; but Middlemist was malicious enough not to make any answer, and, after a turn or two about the room, the Captain went on.

"Though a soldier, Mr. Middlemist, I am not fond of coercive measures, unless in extreme cases! but, if Jenny persists in her determination, I shall, I fear, be under the necessity—I don't like to speak of it to my brother! he has had sorrow and disappointment enough!—and I, being a bachelor, don't perhaps know the best way to manage these women! What would you advise me to do?"

"To let the lady have her own way, Sir!" answered Middlemist dryly.

"What! let her go to Burnthwaite, and discredit the family for ever?" cried the Captain; "no! never while I can wield a sword!"

"You had better!" said Middlemist.

"Never!" cried the Captain, "never! I vow to God, never!"

"It's the best way!" said Middlemist.

"How so?" cried the Captain: "is not that the very manœuvre I want to avoid?"

"It's the only way," cried Middlemist, nodding his head in a determined manner.

"You'll drive me mad!" said the Captain stamping with his well foot, "what! let her go?"

"I did not say so, exactly," answered Middlemist; "but don't oppose her in the first instance! let her think she has her own way, and she will be satisfied to day! whereas, if you say much, she will inevitably get the better of you! it is the only way!"

"Oh!" cried the Captain, "you would be for using stratagem, instead of fair fighting, and so make the enemy commit himself! But I am an old soldier, and I don't like tricks. I would conquer by fair means."

"Very right, where you fight on fair ground, Sir," replied Middlemist; "but, if you have tried fair means, and they have failed, I should not think a little stratagem at all amiss! but you know the

nature of the contest best! I should doubt, myself, whether a visit to dress Mrs. Bleathead was the lady's ultimate aim! she may intend to go further!"

"No!" cried the Captain, angrily, "that I would answer for with my life!"

"In that case," said his friend, "it is of little consequence, whether the lady sleeps here or at the Rectory."

"Pardon me, Sir! I am not of that opinion!" said the Captain, half offended; "I must, I hope, be allowed to be the best judge of what appertains to the honour of my own family, and I feel that it would be a lasting blot on our honour, if my sister in any way contributed to the insolent, unfeeling rejoicing at Normanburn."

Middlemist saw that he had offended the Captain by suggesting the possibility of Mrs. Glassington intending to go to Normanburn; and, therefore, though he could have told him, not only that such certainly was her intention, but the way

in which it was to be executed, he forbore, and only bowed to the disjointed phrases of his companion.

The reader may perhaps wonder how Mr. Middlemist came by his information, and imagine, that he really possessed the black art; but his wonder will cease, when we inform him, that Mrs. Glassington herself told Middlemist, and this, not from any desire to confide in him, but merely because she could not at the moment help telling somebody.

Middlemist really valued the excellent hearts of the Purlbeck family, and he was sorry that the folly and vanity of Mrs. Glassington should expose them to the ill-natured observations of the world, which must inevitably be the case, if this thoughtless woman gratified her love of shew, and her curiosity, as she proposed: he had intended to tell the Captain all he knew, and to concert with him a scheme to prevent this foolish whim from being acted upon; but, after

the rebuff he had received, he determined to say no more. The Captain continued to walk, and to talk, and Middlemist to listen, till Mrs. Beale informed them, that tea was ready, and the ladies impatient.

When they entered the parlour, they found the two elder ladies in very close conversation, in one corner, Mr. Bleathead making notes on his tablets, and Mabella seated at the tea-table, the image of woe, and as pale, and cold, as a statue. Mr. Middlemist was much struck with her appearance, and said,

" Why, Miss Normanburn, the heat has robbed you of your bloom! Why so pale, and wan, fond lover? I believe I must shut the window; you really shiver. Mabella blushed deeply, and said, she preferred having the window open! and then proceeded in rincing the cups, and pouring out the tea.

Captain Normanburn, though, as the reader may have seen, a very good na-

tured man, was yet a little hasty, and a little particular; and he had one or two singularities with respect to his meals, of which he could not dispense with the observance. One was a great dislike to take his tea out of any other vehicle, but a large blue china cup with a handle, to have the tea very strong, and perfectly free from the least mixture of sugar or milk, and he always gave Mabella credit for making it more to his liking than any body else! An observation that never failed to vex Mrs. Glassington, whose reply usually was, that it made a quarter of a pound of tea difference in the week, when Mabella made it, and when she made it.

While Miss Normanburn, as we said, was pouring out the tea, Bleathead anxious to shew the strength of his reasoning powers, seized the Captain by the button, and after two or three preparatory hems! began a sort of studied exhortation to gentleness, and brotherly

love! In proportion as he exhorted the Captain to these virtues, that gentleman's irritability increased, and, though he said nothing, he felt very much annoyed. He looked round, once or twice, to see whether his tea was ready, and Mabella, rising, handed his cup in one hand, and Mr. Bleathead's in the other; and without observing the dreadful error she was committing, she suffered the reverend visitor to take the large cup of pure infusion, and gave the milked and sugared one to her uncle: the Captain had wanted an object on which to vent his rising ire, and he turned about quickly to his niece to express his displeasure by a look: his blind side was next to her, and, somehow, he threw himself off his balance, his wooden leg having slipped, and fell upon the tea-table, which was overturned in so unfortunate a direction, that the hot tea-pot saluted the legs of Mr. Bleathead, (he valued himself upon the beauty of

his legs) and left there what he afterwards called an *indeliable* impression.

We despair of success in describing the scene that followed, or depicting the parson's agony, while he hopped about the room, crying, "Gad Lard! Gad Lard! it hath sarched to the bone! Oh!" or the Captain's dismay, or that of Mr. Normanburn, who just then entered, or the comforting reproaches of Mrs. Bleathead and Mrs. Glassington, the one to her husband, for keeping the Captain standing prating, and the other to her brother, for giving way to his hasty fits! All these we necessarily pass over, as well as the efforts of Mabella, who, in about half an hour, again made tea for the company with happier success, and we go on to record the conversation that followed this alarm.

CHAP. II.

Concerning the Fête.—What Mrs. Glassington liked to hear of.—Hopes.—An old Soldier's Device.

When the fracas was over, Mr. Normanburn, as if moralizing on it, said,

"Ah! Mr. Middlemist! you see our day of misfortune is not past. I suppose you know all about this intended insult to us, and who is to be there?" "Yes, I have heard a good many names mentioned," said Middlemist, "but not half a quarter, I suppose, of the number invited. The Brushwood family, that is, my Lord himself, and his elegant son, Lord Billy Sniddy, and the young ladies: and if her ladyship is well enough she will go! Then, Mr. Nickem, the famous orator, is down with my Lord at present, as well as his mother, and three sisters, Mrs. and

the three Misses Nuhn! I suppose they are on speculation! but their mother having been no *nun*, when she became the mother of Mr. Nickem, would, I should think, be an obstacle in their way!"

"Nat at all, Sar! nat at all!" interrupted Mr. Bleathead; "Mestress Nuhn is now, and has lang been, a vary honorable character, and vary deservedly enjoys a handsome pension far having blessed the warld with that inestimable opposer of jacobins, the Honourable George Nickem."

All this may be very true, and I am sure I am not disposed to detract from her merit in so patriotic an action," said Middlemist; "but I cannot see what occasion there was to extend the charity to the three Misses Nuhn! they have not yet blessed the world with inestimable opposers of jacobins!"

"Na, na, Sar! vary true, vary true," answered Bleathead; "bat they may,

they may, you know!" Mr. Bleathead having laughed heartily at his own wit, Mr. Normanburn asked, who else was to be there?

"Why, I hear, the Rummits are invited! and the Buzzards! and the celebrated Colonel Lashem! and, they say, Sir Gingerly Quaver, the musical knight, and a whole tribe of amateurs are already arrived! there are poets, musicians and painters, and various other curiosities: but, as far as I can learn, the greatest curiosity is Mr. Angelo Lightfoot himself."

"Yas, yas, that I can testify, far I heve seen him, and a prodigious fine young man he is!" said Bleathead.

"Oh! pray do describe him," cried Mrs. Glassington, "I like to hear of fine young men!"

"This gentleman, Ma'am, is of the middle size," said Middlemist, "tolerably well made, except that he is lame on one foot, with a dark complexion, a long nose,

a mouth that falls in a little, dark eyes, and curling hair. I saw him, and observed him, on the morning he called at the Rectory. But, it is not his person that is remarkable! it is his taste! perhaps you would be at a loss to guess what he has ranged on his sideboard to drink out of? I'm sure, I could not have guessed!"

"Why, what is it? a set of golden vases?" asked Mrs. Glassington.

"No, Ma'am! a set of human skulls, mounted in silver!" answered her informer: "he boasts of having collected them on the shores of the Hellespont."

The ladies here made wry faces; and Mr. Bleathead observed, that this sort of vessel was a phenomeena in our country! To which his wife answered, "A peenomeena, Parson, how can that be, when there's no fire in 'em!"

"No," said Middlemist, "their fire is out! but, however, they now serve to convey what gives fire to others. This

young man has many other whims, I hear, equally pleasing, and if they come to my knowledge, you shall have them. They say Miss Moleson and other ladies are expected. She, you know, is, by her mother's side, a Bonham, and a large fortune too, if she marries with her friends' consent!"

"Her mother," said Mr. Normanburn, "was almost the only friend my poor mother had; except, indeed, the two younger sisters! are they living yet?"

"Yes, I believe so—nay, I know they are!" answered Middlemist.

Mrs. Glassington then asked, what young men were there; and Middlemist said he hardly knew, but he heard they were, as he said before, chiefly professional men, of one kind or other.

Poor Mabella had listened with undivided attention to this account, hoping to hear a description of some one, not unlike her unknown friend; but she was disappointed, and determined that the

stranger could not possibly be a visitor at Normanburn House; when suddenly recollecting his drawing implements, she said to Middlemist, "Did you say there were painters down? pray, what sort of men are they?"

Mrs. Bleathead, who grew tired of a conversation, in which she had so small a part, prevented Middlemist from replying, and declared, that as the rain was over, and the moon rising, she must make the best of her way home. The company accordingly separated, and Mabella, complaining of fatigue from the heat of the day, went to bed, where she enjoyed as much repose, as young ladies usually do, who have a growing passion in their bosom, and no small inclination to fever in their frame.

The peace and comfort usually enjoyed by the family at Purlbeck was completely disturbed, if not destroyed, by the events we have recorded; and, during the days that intervened between the time we have

mentioned, and the fête at Normanburn, nothing but gloom, melancholy, and discontent pervaded the house.

Mrs. Glassington had affairs to attend to, which either kept her in her own room, or obliged her to go to Mrs. Bleathead; the Captain retired to his little retreat, as soon as he had eaten his silent meal; or, if it happened that he staid, it was to begin an expostulation with his sister, which she heard with contempt. Mr. Normanburn had several odd visitations, that rendered him very unhappy; and poor Mabella, when not otherwise employed, wandered through the orchard to that place where her unknown companion had left her, and generally wept, during the whole of her walk.

To do Miss Normanburn justice, however, and rescue her from the charge of a too sickly sensibility, and a proneness to fall into the jaws of that passion, that must constitute either the blessing or the curse of the best years of our lives! we

must take leave to inform the reader, that she was, at this time, suffering under an attack of fever, arising from her overheating herself, the agitation and the soaking she had undergone, and the vexation she felt to see her friends so unhappy: if we add to these, not her least misfortune! the affection, and gratitude the stranger had excited in her breast by his kind, gentlemanly manner of conducting himself towards her, and the visible admiration he felt for her, (a charm which, when the admirer is a fine, handsome, intelligent man, and apparently worthy to be loved, no disengaged female heart can easily resist) we certainly may excuse a weakness of spirits, that threatened to destroy the best energies of her mind.

The rest of the family were too much occupied to pay any attention to a change in Mabella, that was, however, sufficiently visible; and what is extraordinary enough, they all were eager to glean every little particular, and particle of in-

telligence respecting Mr. Lightfoot, and the projected celebration, that their friends could gratify them with! This, indeed, was the only thing they seemed perfectly agreed in.

Every fresh visitor that arrived at Normanburn, or every family that came to their own or their friends' residences in the country, was duly reported to them, either by the Bleatheads or Middlemist, and, as the day approached, a stranger would have imagined that they were all most eager for the fête, and had a peculiar interest in its going off well.

There were two people in the house, however, who had sketched a plan they were determined to adhere to; these were the Captain, and his sister, and each made due preparations for the execution of his, or her project.

Captain Lucius Normanburn, having found that all his endeavours to bring his sister even to listen to him, were futile, began to think that where the enemy

could not be forced from his position, a little stratagem would not be amiss. He turned the matter in his mind, various ways, and considered what was most feasible; and, at last, he resolved to administer to Mrs. Glassington on the morning of the thirteenth, a very few grains of ipecacuanha in her tea; these, he knew, must make her sick, and he intended to send off for Doctor Stunt to visit her, naturally enough concluding, that the good man would give her something that would keep her on the invalid list, over the next day.

His sister, on the contrary, had resolved to offer to sleep at Mr. Bleathead's on the evening of the 13th, as by that means she should insure being in good time on the following morning; and she took care to have all her finery (for part of which she ran in debt) put together in a drawer at the rectory, so that she really had nothing but herself to transport. As much elated as a girl with her first ball, or a

young ensign with his red coat, she saw the evening of the 12th of August arrive, and she passed the whole of it in brushing her hair, and applying buttermilk and elderflower water to her face, neck, and hands; so that it was near two o'clock in the morning before she got into bed, and she then found Mabella so hot, that she herself was rendered very uncomfortable. She had already fatigued herself very much, and, fearful that she might be rendered incapable of enjoying the whole of the sight on the morrow, she resolved that she would breakfast in bed, and with this resolve she fell asleep.

As soon as she awoke, the next morning, she awoke Mabella too, and bid her get up, and make breakfast! An order that Mabella, though suffering under a dreadful head-ache, did not hesitate to obey; and the Captain, who was on the alert in the pursuance of his object, already sung Te Deum for the victory. He sent

his niece to cut the bread and butter, while he made the tea, and when she came back, he gave her the basin, well sweetened and well drugged, to carry to her aunt; bidding her mind, and stir it well, or all the sugar would remain at the bottom. Mabella did as she was bid, and her aunt, being thirsty, drank the whole off at once, and then began to dress herself. During the time she was at her toilet, she had some unpleasant feelings, and misgivings, which she ascribed to the heat of the morning, though it was a gloomy morning, and less hot than many preceding days; but, however, by having the window thrown open, and her attention a good deal engaged by the agreeable figure in the glass, she kept tolerably well till the ceremony was finished, and then went down with the firm resolution of telling the Captain that he need not expect her at home that evening. She found him in the front garden, attending to his fruit trees, and going up to him

with a sort of jaunting step, and a toss of her chin, she said, "I shall walk to Burnthwaite this morning, Captain Normanburn, before the weather changes! it looks terribly gloomy! and so I shall stay there to night, as well as to-morrow night."

To this the Captain made no answer; but he looked at her, in order to discover, if possible, how her stomach was. Finding that he was silent, she said,

"Why now, Lucius, you are angry with me, I know, about this going! but what does it signify? you know, I'm my own mistress, and determined to do as I like, so you may as well let it pass, and be good humoured about it." "I'm not ill-humoured, Mrs. Glassington," said the Captain gravely, "but I'm sorely wounded to see you have no more family pride! depend upon it, you'll have some drawback or other! you can't go unpunished! you aid the natural enemy of your house! but you'll have it."

"Pshaw! superstitious nonsense!" cried Mrs. Glassington; but as she spoke, she felt a dreadful qualm at her stomach, that made her turn as pale as death. This the Captain pretended not to see, but turned again to his fruit-tree.

"Good God!" exclaimed the lady, much struck with the sudden attack, at such a moment. "Is any thing the matter?" asked the Captain.

"Matter! oh! yes, I'm very ill! a sudden seizure! oh dear! do support me!" cried the lady.

The Captain pitied his sister, though he was glad to see his device had succeeded, and while he held her head, and she relieved her stomach, he roared out lustily for Blog to take the galloway, and ride, as fast as he could, to fetch the Doctor. Poor Mrs. Glassington was conducted into the house, and put to bed again, her brother observing, that he thought the symptoms very like a hospital fever, and in the course of an hour and half, the re-

nowned Stunt arrived, with his hat in his hand, and his pockets well stored with medicine ; but he is too great a man to be tacked to the tail of a chapter.

CHAP. III.

Effects of an old Soldier's Device.—News.—A guess at the Stranger.

BEFORE Stunt's arrival, Mrs. Glassington had by the aid of warm water entirely relieved herself from all that annoyed her, and, if her fears had not blinded her, she would have felt that she had nothing more to fear; but the dread of an infectious fever had taken complete possession of her mind, and when Stunt entered the room, she burst into an agony of tears, and exclaimed,

"Oh, Doctor! I've got the yellow fever! you'll pass sentence of death on me, I know you will!" Stunt made no answer, for which one reason probably was, that he was quite out of breath with coming up stairs! but this we advance with caution; he sat down on a chair, placed for him,

and while he continued to puff violently, felt the patient's pulse; she watched his face, while he did so, and seeing him fill his cheeks with wind, dilate his nostrils, and open his eyes, half as wide again as their usual stare, she sobbed out, "Yes! I shan't live three days! I know I shan't!"

"What!" exclaimed Stunt, now able to speak, "you feel as if you was going, do you? That is always a bad, I had o'most said, an infalliable symptom! Have you ony black spatches out on you, Madam?" This question induced Mrs. Glassington to examine her skin, and the washing and bathing of the face and neck the night before having produced a slight sort of nettle-rash on her bosom, she cried out, "Oh! yes—I'm a dead woman."

"Why, to be sure, you do seem to be in a baddish way, Madam!" answered Stunt; "but if you've faith in *Hypocrites*, as t' Parson calls him, you may whope to

be better. Here I've browt some stuff in my pocket, at's just the thing, an you may swallow it now."

"Oh! what is it?" cried the lady.

"Nay, Madam, it's again all t' laws of pharnacy, and material medicum, to tell them at swallows, what is i' t' cup! come, come! gape and swallow, and I wand you you'll get aboot again!" answered the Doctor. The lady obeyed, and though the draught was an abominable mixture of drugs, more fit for a horse than a human being, she shewed no reluctance to take it, to the last drop.

As soon as she was covered up, the room a little darkened, and the windows closed, according to order, the Doctor began to converse with Mabella, and to tell her all he had heard about the family at Normanburn.

"There is to be all t' Brushwood gurt folks there, Miss," said he, "I had t' honour to pay my basemanes there this

morning, at Brushwood Park; an I saw my Lord, hisself! a monstrous fine man, as straight as an arrow, and as stiff as a main-mast! ha! ha! ha! He's a fine loyal character! always goes wi' t' Minister, through thick an thin! an wi' good reason, too, as his uncle could tell, if he was alive! but I don't like ripping up old stories, aboot accounts, and eighty thousands, and contracts, and titles, and votes! not I! nay, it might be more nor t' eighty thousand, for aught I know. There is a Miss Moleson, and a Miss Trehern, and some more nice lasses, beside t' young ladies; and my Lord Billy Sniddy's as blithe as a lark among 'em. They laugh'd hard, all t' time I was there, and seemed right glad to see me!"

To all this Mabella gave no answer; but the sick woman asked, who was at Normanburn; to which the Doctor answered, by repeating over a list of

names; and then added, that young Mr. Lightfoot was quite a *vartuosy,* and was going to have a picture of Normanburn made, from Pike Hill. "I wonder you have not met him, some o' you," continued Stunt, "for he's taken a gurt liking to coming up through t' wood, and he's spent a day or two, they say, in writing some poetry about an oak that was splitten i' t' thunder-storm; and Sir summat Quaver is making music to suit it, and it's to be made a glee."

This information struck a cold damp to the heart of Mabella, who imagined she had now discovered, that her greatest foe was her companion in the wood; but, being resolved to know as certainly as possible, she said, "Is he lame?"

"Lame, Miss? why no, not to speak of!" answered Stunt; "there is a something; but he can run like a greyhound, if he will, and they say he dances surprisingly."

"Is he handsome?" cried Mabella, now convinced that she had not observed his lame foot.

"Oh yes, Miss, *very!* very handsome!" said Stunt. Poor Mabella could hear no more; she darted out of the room, to avoid weeping in it; and, running into the parlour, threw herself into a chair, and sobbed violently.

Her uncle, who was not a little solicitous to hear how his sister did, heard her, and came in great alarm to ask if her aunt was so bad, as to occasion this burst of grief; and Mabella not being able for some time to answer, he began to imagine that his trick might have consequences that he had never contemplated. In this fear, he left Mabella, who could not easily regain her self-command, and hurried up stairs, where he arrived, just as the Doctor was leaving the patient's room. He seized that important gentleman by the hand, and

with a countenance agitated and eager, he cried,

"Is my sister very ill, Doctor? I hope not! I hope not!"

If the Doctor had any opinion at all about Mrs. Glassington's case, it was, that she was free from any serious disease, and suffering only from having eaten something that disagreed with her: but he was too good a member of the learned body of compounders of drugs, and dispensers of plasters, to inform the relations of his patients, when he had such a view of a case; with laudable skill he drew up his mouth, half closed his eyes, and shook his head; and, when again pressed by the Captain, answered in a low voice,

"She's sadly upset, Captain! it's but a bad job, I promise you!"

The poor Captain's heart smote him, and his countenance would have condemned him in any court in Europe;

though, at the same time, he could not help in part mistrusting Stunt's opinion, and ascribing it to its real motive: he, however, conducted that learned apothecary into the parlour, and there desired to know what complaint he imagined his sister had got, and whether he thought it would be advisable to send for any other doctor.

The Doctor passed over the first part of this question, in his eagerness to reply to the second, which he did in these words, at the same time blushing crimson:

"Another doctor, Captain! Ods my life! I never think it advisable to call in one of your twopenny-halfpenny men, that just poke in their snouts, and out again; and because, forsooth! they have got M. D. stuck at their tails, thinks us poor potekers know no more than theirselves. What, you need not be flayd, mun! as long as Madam has a drop of blood left in her, I'll keep her alive;

and this here Typus that she has got, I'll soon send it out at back door. I have given her a famous dose in these here contiguous complaints, and in a week or so, she'll be as hale as hale!"

This speech reassured the Captain, who thought, rationally enough, that his dose had done no great harm, perhaps, ultimately, good; and as soon as Stunt departed, he visited his sister, and comforted her for her sufferings, by telling her that the Doctor, he *dare say*, would set her on her legs again in a few days. Mrs. Glassington wept, partly with apprehension, and partly with mortification, at not being able to enjoy a pleasure, that had already cost her so dear! a pleasure that had a peculiar zest from its having been forbidden, and for which she would have sacrificed every other gratification, that the ensuing winter might produce. The thought of her finery was wormwood to her! and her grief was increased, as the several ar-

ticles passed in mental review before her: she contrived, however, to survive her sorrow, and the learned Stunt's discipline; and, before the week had expired, she was again in the parlour, perfectly well, though somewhat paler and thinner than when she felt the first qualm. One pleasure she had with the rest of the family, and that was, to hear the whole, full, and particular account of the Normanburn Fête from their friends, who were present; an account that annoyed them more than they could express, but to which they listened with an extraordinary eagerness.

CHAP. IV.

A wise Aunt.—Further Prospects.

WHILE all this was going on, no notice was taken of the altered appearance of Miss Normanburn, except by a casual observation, that she looked as if she had over-tired herself, and it was not till the latter end of the week, that the family took the alarm, and not without reason, for she was in agonizing pain, and unable to hold up her head.

This changed the current of ideas in the house, and her father, uncle and aunt, nursed her by turns, with all the tenderness of real affection, and anxious solicitude for her recovery. The great Stunt was again called in, and, luckily for Ma bella, he happened to hit upon that mode of treatment, which was least injurious to her, and by that means lessened her suf-

ferings, while the fever in due time attained to its height, and she survived the crisis.

During a great part of this time, she was light-headed, and rambled exceedingly in her talk; and, as Mrs. Glassington sat up with her several nights, when the danger was supposed to be greatest, she heard her repeat over and over again,

"Farewell! Oh! the thunder! I shall die in the wood! The thunder kills lovers!" and other disjointed expressions, that savoured strongly of the tender passion.

With many other worthy people, Mrs. Glassington believed there was a fatality in love! She was a connoisseur in the symptoms of that malady, and, looking backwards, she could not help wondering at her own blindness in not having sooner discovered the original cause of Mabella's disorder. Her next wonder was, with whom, and upon what occasion her neice had fallen in love, and she endeavoured

to make it out from her ramblings, while the fever was strong.

First, she found out that it must have been in the wood Mabella had seen the person, let him be who he would; secondly, that the lovers had been out in a thunder-storm; and, from comparing one thing with another, she determined that it must have been that storm when the oak, Stunt talked about, was struck. This, luckily, gave her a clue to the person; for she remembered, that Stunt had asserted, that Mr. Angelo Lightfoot had celebrated the oak in a poem, and that he was become much attached to the wood, and often walked there; it must then be this young man, whom Mabella had met; and when Mrs. Glassington had come to this conclusion, which Mabella's agitation on hearing Stunt's news had corroborated, she could not help looking upon it as a particular dispensation of Providence (for she did not doubt that the passion was mutual) to restore her

niece to that opulence, and to that estate, she ought to have enjoyed.

Next to being in love herself, Mrs. Glassington enjoyed another person's being entangled; and, in this case, she foresaw so much delightful embarrassment, and so many tender agitations, before it came to the wedding, that it fully occupied her mind, and enabled her to bear the tædium, anxiety, and fatigue of watching, without being half so sensible to it, as she would have been.

From these interesting contemplations she travelled on to that day, when she should accompany the lovely bride, all drest in white, satin, and lace, to Normanburn House! examine with her every interesting spot, both in, and about the mansion, receive the visits of the nobility and gentry, and return them in a new and elegant equipage, bearing the shield of Lightfoot, with the arms of Normanburn, duly quartered. She had already run over in her mind the names of the

principal families, who would, on such an occasion, flock to Normanburn, when the thought of her dear friend, Mrs. Bleathead, suddenly crossed her, and she asked herself, how she should manage not to offend that good lady? It was utterly impossible to think of asking her with Lady Brushwood, and the Honourable Ladies Sniddy, and she was afraid, at last, that she should be under the necessity of cutting her completely; a fear that, to do her justice, at first gave her some pain; but she soon became reconciled to it, by remembering, that such things were very common, quite everyday occurrences, and she should prove her natural gentility by it. She determined, as soon as Mabella had a little recovered, to hear every interesting particular from herself, and, in the mean time, to make due inquiries of Stunt, who was a kind of daily advertiser, respecting young Lightfoot.

The latter part of her determination

was reduced to practice the following morning, and Stunt assured her, that the young man often came on Pike Hill, while he was at the House, but that he was to go to the races in a day or two.

She next asked, if there was any talk of his marrying? to which the ready reporter answered, that every body talked about it! and that Lady Brushwood had shewn him great attention, and it was thought that one of the Lady Sniddys would try hard at him, but the young man himself hinted he had a secret attachment which gave him great concern, and about which, he had written heaps upon heaps of beautiful poetry! "I told my lady so, myself!" continued the Doctor, "for I thought she owt to know, as she wanted him for a son-in-law; but she answered, that all that was mere fiction, for he had no attachments of any kind."

This, and similar intelligence, confirmed Mrs. Glassington in her opinion; and she longed to communicate the discovery

she had made to her brothers: but somehow, she had a presentiment that they would bring forward, what she called their fine notions, and, perhaps, break the poor child's heart; so she resolved to have no other confidante but Mrs. Bleathead, whose agency, she thought, might be very useful in the course of the plot.

And here we cannot but pause to express our regret that Mrs. Glassington, with so fervent an imagination, and such a spirit for intrigue, never took it into her head to write a novel, in the progress of which, such qualifications are really useful, while, in real life, they are usually injurious to the possessor: probably, had she happened to think of it, she might have made an essay in the love-line, and obliged the world with rich and luxuriant scenes, calculated to warm even a Hermit in his cell. Plots, too, are now very much the fashion! and we think we may venture to assert, that hers would have equalled in interest, and had as good

success in the world, as the waggon plot, or the potatoe-bullet plot, or the sealed-green-bag plot! all of which have had their share in contributing to the amusement of the people of this age. But to return.

As soon as Miss Normanburn was able to give a collected answer to her friends. Mrs. Glassington took her hand, and said, "Don't fret, Bell, my love! you'll soon be well now, depend upon it! for *I* know! Lord bless you, love, one might have seen, a fortnight since, that you were in love!"

This indiscreet, though well meant, address, agitated Mabella exceedingly, and it was some time before she had strength enough to answer,

"Oh, my dear Aunt! forgive me! and don't tell papa."

"That I shall not, my dear, depend upon it!" returned Mrs. Glassington: "he would not hear of it *now!*"

"Hear of what?" asked Mabella.

"Nay, child, don't play tricks with me!" answered this prudent aunt; "why I know all about Mr. Lightfoot, and the wood, and the thunder, and the oak! and now he is refusing lots of fine ladies for love of you, and writing such deep poetry, as makes all his friends cry again."

"What about?" said Mabella, her head beginning to wander.

"About, love? why about you, to be sure!" and here Mrs. Glassington concluded the conversation, for Mabella fainted, and when she recovered, her aunt had prudence enough not to disturb her any more.

CHAP. V.

A new Acquaintance, with the View of a young first-rate Belle.—Her History.

It was on the day following the conversation that we have recorded in the last chapter, and about three o'clock in the afternoon, that a superb equipage drove up to the gate of the garden at Purlbeck, to the no small dismay of the peaceable inhabitants of the cottage, who were thrown into a complete panic by the inquiry of a lace-decked footman for Mrs. Glassington. To have denied that she was at home would have been in vain, as the man saw her with a coloured apron on, carrying a jug of barley-water up stairs, and he returned to communicate the answer of, 'at home' to a young lady very elegantly drest, who followed him

into the garden, and was announced as Miss Moleson.

She entered the parlour where Mrs. Glassington, divested of her apron, was ready to receive her, and approaching that good lady with an agreeably respectful air, said, "My apology, Madam, for this intrusion, is the command of my worthy aunts, Mrs. Mary, and Mrs. Sarah Bonham, not to quit the country without calling in person to inquire after the family of Normanburn."

To this Mrs. Glassington returned a suitable reply, and inquired in her turn respecting the friends of her mother.

"My mother died the year after Mrs. Normanburn," said Miss Moleson, "and my aunts, when they quitted their pretty cottage near Knaresborough, went to reside at York, where they now are. Age has altered them a good deal, especially my Aunt Mary, but their hearts are as warm as ever. I am going to York tomorrow, Madam, and I would not come

sooner to Purlbeck, that I might be able to say, I brought the latest intelligence. But may not I be favoured with an introduction to Miss Normanburn? I should like to see her, for I hear she is uncommonly beautiful!" Hearing the state Mabella was in, she expressed her sorrow, and was about to take leave, when the two brothers entered to pay their compliments to her. She started when she saw Mr. Normanburn, who had not been lately under the hands of his shaver; but, being well bred, she contrived to suppress her astonishment, and entered into conversation with them. She said that she should stay about ten days at York, and then go on a tour to the Lakes. "If," continued she, "it should suit my companion to come this way, I shall have great pleasure in calling again, as I should like very well to revive so old and respectable a family friendship."

After this, and some other polite speeches, in the course of which she in-

formed the Normanburns that she was now at Brushwood Park, and that she had two ladies waiting for her in the carriage, Miss Moleson took leave, and was escorted to the carriage by the two brothers; to the no small terror of the ladies in the vehicle, who covered their faces, and shrunk back in their seats, as soon as Mr. Normanburn's head appeared without the garden gate.

This trifling incident had a surprising effect on Mr. Normanburn, who, during the next ten days, talked incessantly about the Bonhams, and repeated over and over again with great accuracy all Miss Moleson had said, praising her behaviour, as well as her person.

Miss Moleson was, indeed, a very fine young woman, being not only tall, but well proportioned. She had a very brilliantly fair complexion, that had withstood the effects of London dissipation, which only so far succeeded as to rob her of the roses in her cheeks. Her hair was

light flaxen, as were her eye-brows, and eye-lashes, a defect that she had remedied with respect to the eye-brows, by a little pardonable art: her eyes were blue, and her mouth delicately formed. She was now in her twenty-seventh year, and, though rather a young looking woman, had in her countenance a certain expression of care, that seemed older than her years.

Her aunt, Lady Brushwood, (she was her father's sister) had educated her with her own daughters, the Ladies Sniddy, and by the time Miss Moleson had reached her eighteenth birth-day, she was considered to be the most accomplished young woman, and the most highly finished in the fashionable world.

As she was older than her own daughters, Lady Brushwood had her presented, being determined, as she said, to give her *a run* for a season before Lady Sophy and Lady Pleasance came out, and, if she was lucky enough to make a good

match, it might lead to their doing the same.

There was nothing gay, nothing fashionable, nothing, in short, of dissipation, that London, Bath, Brighton, and Weymorth could in turns present, that Miss Moleson did not gild by her presence, and she never appeared without a train of admirers, many of whom would have thought themselves blest to have made her their own. But young men of fashion, of the present day, take care not to commit themselves by making indiscreet tenders of their persons, and estates; those who really would have preferred Miss Moleson to the other young women they were in the habit of meeting, had the precaution to inquire into the circumstances, and habits of her father, and it was soon known, that though Mr. Moleson had a comfortable estate, which, if he did not marry again, would probably come to his daughter, yet, that he had indulged a mania for improvement

to such an excess, that at present he could not give her any fortune, and if he continued his schemes, the property would probably be so deeply mortgaged, as to leave this apparent heiress little more than her mother's portion.

Like many other admired and admirable young women, then, Miss Moleson concluded her first year of gaiety, without a single offer, and her second was equally unfortunate. In the third, fourth, and fifth, she refused one or two gentlemen considerably advanced in years, and who would, on that account, have dispensed with a fortune to be paid immediately, and she was already upon the list of the *has beens*, when she met at York races with a gentleman, who had made an immense fortune in India, and who was pleased with the fairness of her complexion.

Miss Moleson was now in her twenty-fourth year, and Lady Brushwood insisted upon it, that it would be madness to

refuse such settlements as Mr. Boby offered! she had, she said, no notion of letting her little partialities (she had had two or three tender inclinations, that never reached maturity) interfere with a good establishment, and Miss Moleson, who in réality had no reasonable objection to Mr. Boby, he not being either agreeable or disagreeable to her, consented to receive his addresses. Mr. Boby was invited to Brushwood Park, and for about two months he performed all the customary and necessary attentions to the lady; but he had the mortification to perceive that she every day behaved with an increased coolness towards him, and his pride took the alarm, where his delicacy would not. He solicited, and obtained a private interview, in which, through all her reluctance to throw away such an establishment, he was confirmed in his belief, that she had contracted rather an aversion to, than an affection for him, and he instantly told her what he thought:

she could not deny the fact, and the affair was immediately at an end. The mortification, consequent on this event, produced a bad effect on the health of Miss Moleson, and she went to stay with her aunts, the Bonhams, as well to change the scene, as to escape from the reproaches of Lady Brushwood, and the taunts of her cousins, and, while with them, she contracted a strict intimacy with a Miss Trehern, who was likewise on a visit in York.

Miss Trehern was about the same age as Miss Moleson, and in the enjoyment of a small independency; but though this had procured her one or two respectable offers, she professed her intention of living single, as she could not, she said, hope to find a modern man, alive to all the trembling solicitudes of true love, or calculated to make a heart of ethereal sensibility, happy in that state, whose joys were heavenly extacies, and whose sorrows were arrows of fire.

Perhaps, a more dangerous companion could not have been found for a mind in the state of that of Miss Moleson, than was Miss Trehern; and, though Miss Moleson had more sense than her companion, she was very soon completely governed by her in all the opinions she adopted, and learned to sigh for all the trembling solicitudes of true love, which, she was now thoroughly convinced, she had never felt.

Miss Moleson had been about six months under the tuition of her Angelina, (so she called Miss Trehern) when she heard that a nephew of her mother's, whom she had not seen for eight or ten years, was arrived in England, and, when they met, she fell desperately in love with him. And now began the delights of the dear Angelina, who, after blowing the fire with all her might, revealed the secret to Mrs. Mary Bonham, who, in her turn, in conjunction with her sister, sounded Mr. Felix Bonham on the state

of his heart. Mr. Felix Bonham wished to marry; he found his cousin interesting, and he said that if his father, the Admiral, could be prevailed on to make him a proper allowance, he should be but too happy to profit by a partiality that did him so much honour. He would not, however, either see or correspond with his cousin, till this could be ascertained, lest he might not be able to fulfil his engagement, and the lovers had to wait the issue of a long correspondence between the two fathers: and, after a tedious delay, during which the young man amused himself by mixing with the gay world in London, and Bath, where he did not find one fair, whom he would have preferred to Cecilia, a bargain was struck, and the young people were informed, that they might proceed to secure their happiness.

When Mr. Bonham received this intelligence, he wrote to his cousin to express his pleasure, and to solicit permission to

wait on her, and, certainly, his letter was rather, as Miss Trehern said, that of a gentleman, than of an enraptured lover. Cecilia, however, could not but be pleased with it, spite of the foolish notions she had acquired, and Mr. Bonham came down to his aunt's in York, where Cecilia was staying. She found him a sensible, elegant companion, indeed she sometimes thought him too sensible; but his attentions were rather like those of an affectionate brother, than an enraptured lover.

This, Miss Trehern, who saw them frequently, remarked; and Cecilia, sighing, answered, that men had not the tenderness of her Angelina.

She had, notwithstanding, ample reason to be satisfied, for, though Mr. Bonham exhibited no raptures, he had a great affection for his cousin, and preferred her to all the women he had seen, and with the delicacy inseparable from true affection, he begged that she would in-

dulge him with an early day, as soon as the lawyers had prepared the necessary writings for their fathers, and themselves to sign. His cousin consented to this; and, as his father required his presence in Devonshire, he left Cecilia to attend upon him; and it was by letter agreed that they should pass the race-week with the Mrs. Bonhams at York, then marry, and make a tour to the Lakes.

It was during this interval of time, that Cecilia and Miss Trehern accepted a pressing invitation from Lady Brushwood to come over, and see the gay doings of Normanburn. She would herself, she said, convey them back to York the beginning of the race week, and as Felix was not to return there before that time, and all the clothes, &c. were ordered, it was a delightful plan! The young ladies, as we have seen, accepted the invitation, and, on the day following that when she

called at Purlbeck, Miss Moleson and her friend, Miss Trehern, were conveyed back to the old city in one of Lord Brushwood's carriages.

CHAP. VI.

Disappointments.—Their Consequences produce a new Scheme.

It is not our intention, at present, to attend Miss Moleson to the altar, or even to describe the preparations made by her excellent aunts for an event that gave them real pleasure; we shall leave Cecilia to the care of her Angelina, and return to our poor Heroine, who was rather unpleasantly situated when we quitted her. Before the time, that Miss Moleson had mentioned, as the probable one of her return, was passed, Mabella was pronounced out of danger, and her aunt, falsely imagining she was contributing to her felicity, talked to her about nothing but Lightfoot, and encouraged

her to cherish a hope, that her love would be crowned with success.

At first, Mabella felt so ashamed of being in love, that she positively denied feeling any partiality for the stranger; but, by degrees, this wore off, and she repeated, to her aunt, over and over again, all that had passed, and at every fresh repetition Mrs. Glassington was more and more convinced, that he could be no other but Lightfoot. Every thing the stranger had said applied to the situation in which he stood with regard to that family, and she now doubly regretted that illness, that had prevented her from going to Normanburn.

"If I had gone," said she, "he would have found an opportunity to pay me particular attention, and so it would have come about! Well, we must be patient, Bell! I'll answer for him, that he will soon be in the country again, and then we can make it out, somehow."

Week after week, however, elapsed, and neither Miss Moleson nor Mr. Lightfoot appeared in the neighbourhood; and Mabella, who was talked into the passion by her aunt, an admirable second to a new-born partiality, felt all the sickness, and mortification her situation naturally produced. She had a presentiment, in her own mind, of some great sorrow attending this affection, and she every day became more alarmed, lest her aunt should tell Mrs. Bleathead, or her papa.

If Mabella had known her aunt, as well as the reader does, she would have been certain, that Mrs. Bleathead knew all about the matter, and nothing but fear of crushing the affair enabled her to forbear from telling her brothers.

In this situation of affairs did the family at Purlbeck pass their Autumn! Christmas came, but Mr. Angelo Lightfoot did not visit Normanburn! Mabella's birth-day again was observed, and still

he had not been! The spring was uncommonly fine, and the country beautiful, still it did not tempt him, and Mabella was at last convinced, that guessing who she was, he had contracted a dislike to her, and probably would not love such a poor simpleton, even if she had another Normanburn to offer him.

A depression of spirits followed this conviction, to those, who knew not the cause, really alarming; and the Captain at length proposed to Mr. Normanburn to stretch a point, and send Mrs. Glassington and Mabella to Harrogate for a month, to try what change of air and change of scene would do for the child. Mr. Normanburn readily consented, and, when this was communicated to Mrs. Glassington, she fairly wept with joy, and set about making preparations with great avidity. In a fortnight, the two ladies were ready to set out; but the money was not ready to pay for their

journey, and they had nearly another fortnight to wait before the necessary sum was provided.

To a girl of Mabella's age and disposition such a journey was the beginning of a new era, and she formed the strangest notions of what Harrogate was like, that can be well imagined: she listened with astonishment to her aunt's vivid descriptions of balls, and riding parties, and walking parties! She was bid by that good lady to hope, that at Harrogate she might meet with a better offer, than Lightfoot would have been, and advised to think no more about him, but to get up her looks, and do her best.

To all this Mabella answered only by her sighs; and those, not sighs of love, but of distress at parting from her dear Papa, and Uncle, from whom she had never till then been separated; and they, on their parts, felt as if their only happiness was going with Mabella. They were many times on the point of saying,

that she should not go; but her wan cheek, and downcaast eye, soon banished the selfish feeling from their bosoms. From the time when Mabella had parted from her unknown friend, whom, by Mrs. Glassington's direction, she learned to call Angelo, she had never ventured into the wood; but now she was going to leave home for so long time as a month, a whole month, she thought to take leave of the spot, where she had found the stranger asleep. She accordingly set off after breakfast, and though much fatigued, and not a little distressed, she persevered in her walk, till she reached the oak. Every thing was in the state in which she left it, except that a rustic seat was erected on the spot where the stranger had put his camp stool, and this she naturally enough conjectured could not be done by any body but Lightfoot. This to her was strong confirmation, that it was he, she had saved, and she began to feel some contempt for her own weakness

in nursing a favourable opinion, that, it was evident, from the single circumstance of his avoiding the neighbourhood, was not returned! with a violent flood of tears she resolved to conquer it, and returned home certainly happier than she went out. She could not help blaming her too indulgent aunt for the encouragement she had given her, and yet she was grateful, as it was evident this sprung from her kindness! "But, henceforward, I will think for myself!" said Mabella, "and try to conquer my likings, and dislikings! my uncle says they are too strong, and will lead me into trouble! I'll take care they shan't, though!"

How well she could conquer her feelings was shewn in taking leave of her papa and uncle, when she sobbed, as if she were not to return! Her intention, however, was good, and she did not forget it on her journey, which was begun on a beautiful May morning, when her aunt and herself being conveyed from Purl-

beck to M——, on galloways, one a borrowed one, and attended by Jacky Walker, were there put into a coach, that took them to Harrogate, where they arrived all safe in the evening.

CHAP. VII.

Hints on Family Consequence.—The Wit of a Harrogate Party.

MABELLA was so new to travelling, and had so imperfectly recovered her strength, that early as it was when she reached Harrogate, she was obliged to go to bed; and Mrs. Glassington with her usual inconsiderateness prevented her from sleeping there, by the bustle she made in selecting and arranging her clothes, so that they might produce the happiest effect on the company. Several of them that she had altered by Mrs. Bleathead's patterns, she put on, just to see how they became her, and to ascertain the most advantageous mode of adjusting them; and she talked, the whole time, with a volubility that exhausted her niece, who would have been glad to rest quietly.

They ordered tea in their own room, and Mrs. Glassington thought it was as well to inquire of the chamber-maid when she brought it, whom they had in the house, so that she might arrange her plans, and not contract any improper connexions with people who were her inferiors. Indeed, Mrs. Glassington was fully sensible of the value of that ancient blood that flowed in her veins, and, as if she thought every body could read it in her face, she expected to be treated with that deference, a true daughter of Normanburn deserved. But the poor woman forgot that her poverty alone would naturally expose her to neglect, where a pawnbroker's daughter would receive the greatest and most undivided attention; and she was not aware that she was as destitute of natural dignity, as of those mental acquirements that supply the place of the gifts of fortune. Like too many others, she sported what she called a dignified manner, that was calculated,

as she supposed, to strike those beneath her with awe, and teach them the respect due to their superiors! but which, in fact, usually exposes the person using it, either to contempt, derision, or anger.

Thinking it necessary to give the servants of the house a proper idea of her consequence, she spoke to her chambermaid in a very arrogant tone, and asked her what company was in the house? to which the other answered in a voice little less haughty than her own, that there was plenty, such as they were.

"But who are they?" continued Mrs. Glassington; "are they people of fashion and family, or some of the Leeds' *Shearings*?"

"Nay! for matter of that, it's too soon for t' *tip-tops*," answered the chambermaid; but there's a vast o' *middlings*! Yerk gentry, and sich like!"

There was so evident a want of respect in the woman's manner, (arising, indeed, rather from her native impertinence,

than from any settled plan to offend Mrs. Glassington, whom it was her interest to oblige) that that lady took fire, and bid her learn to speak more civilly, and know who it was she was speaking to.

"Aye!" said the girl, half muttering as she opened the door, "I should like to knaw, for, I reckon, you're noa gurt things, by your crwoaking."

This Mrs. Glassington heard only in part, but that part was enough to offend her still more highly: she had not discretion enough to let the girl go, though she had shut the door, but opening it, called after her to come back directly. This call not being immediately attended to, she ran out into the passage, and screamed, loud enough to be heard in every neighbouring apartment, "Come back, you slut, you! and learn to pay proper respect to a gentlewoman born! I insist on your coming back, you long tongued minx!"

This summons would have proved

equally inefficient with the former, had not the mistress of the house, a clever, civil woman, happened to be coming up stairs at that moment, and seeing the rage Mrs. Glassington was in, obliged the girl to go back again. She listened with respectful attention, and she made the girl listen to Mrs. Glassington's complaint, and expressed her sorrow that any body in her house should have dared to say or do, or think the least thing to offend any lady of fashion! This somewhat softened Mrs. Glassington, and she said; "That's the thing, ma'am! the young woman might have known better how to distinguish a gentlewoman, and one of the old Yorkshire families, too, and not given way to her tongue." Then turning to the woman, who could hardly be restrained from answering by her mistress, who shook her head at her, and frowned, she said; "you see young woman how differently your Mistress, behaves to what you do! it shews her

good sense, and I should like to give you a piece of advice to keep your tongue under good government, and not give way to impertinance!"

"And very much obliged she is, madam, for the trouble you take to give her t'vice," said the Mistress, "and I hope she'll profit by it!"

"I hope she will," said Mrs. Glassington, "and remember that she once affronted one of the Normanburn family! a family that is as respectable, and more ancient than most."

As Mrs. Glassington concluded this speech, she drew herself up to more than her usual height, and her auditor made a proportionably low courtsey, and asked if it was my Lady Normanburn she had the honour to speak to? With a feeling of vexation, that she was not my Lady, Mrs. Glassington answered, that her name was not now Normanburn, though her niece was so called! her name was simple Mrs. Glassington.

"There! do you hear that, Betty? *simple* Mrs. Glassington!" cried the mistress, making another low reverence, and motioning to Betty to go away. Betty obeyed, half laughing to herself, and the Mistress asked if Mrs. Glassington would please to come down to supper, as it would not be long before the company met. This, however, Mrs Glassington declined, and said she would make her appearance the next morning, when Miss Normanburn would be able to keep her in countenance. The Mistress then left her, and Mrs. Glassington proceeded in her domestic arrangements, till near eleven o'clock.

All this passed, reader, in a room, of which the walls were by no means thicker than lath and plaster usually is, and with the door open to the passage, and staircase, so that, however friendly the walls might have been to retention, their aid must in this case have been unavailing. The whole conversation was over-

heard by at least six or eight people, whom Mrs. Glassington's formidable call after Betty had induced to put their heads out into the passage; and before the entertainment of the evening was over, there was not an individual of the party, who had not laughed heartily at *simple* Mrs. Glassington. Many jokes passed on the necessity of her niece coming down to keep her in countenance, and the ladies wondered, whether the niece was as thorough bred a gentlewoman as simple Mrs. Glassington: one or two asked if she was an alderman's wife, or had kept a gin shop? and this was only stopped by a young gentleman, who was a captain in the yeomanry, and who said, that Mrs. Glassington was really a gentlewoman, and no family more respectable than that of Normanburn. This for some time checked the ladies tongues, and we shall therefore in another chapter, go on to the morning of the next day; a morning of great

importance to Mrs. Glassington, who was about to make her re-entrance into the world, after a seclusion, to her, unpleasant and unprofitable.

CHAP. VIII.

Native Modesty and good Sense.—An extraordinary Character, not uncommon.

In spite of her disturbances and vexations, Miss Normanburn awoke on the following morning much refreshed, and, stimulated by novelty and the expectation of she hardly knew what, she arose, and dressed herself with all diligence. She was ready to go down stairs before her aunt, who was more and more dissatisfied, every time she saw the face of her niece by the side of her own in the glass; but at length the important task was completed, and the ladies, descending, were shewn by a waiter into the long room, where at separate tables the company were most of them at breakfast.

The sight of so many strangers, and

the necessity there was of walking to the other end of this long room, startled Miss Normanburn, made her change colour more than once, and took from her legs almost all the little strength they had; she trembled violently, and yielding to her timidity, would have retreated. This her aunt, though herself somewhat appalled, opposed; and advancing to a vacant table at one side of the room, bid the waiter bring breakfast. But what was her consternation and dismay, to see every eye, male and female turned towards her, and to hear a sort of general titter, and the running whisper of "a gentlewoman born! simple Mrs. Glassington." She would have looked round, but on every side the same sort of countenance presented itself, and she was thankful for the arrival of the tea-urn, which gave her something to do.

Miss Normanburn had entered the room with the idea, that she was going among gentlemen and gentlewomen,

and it was the strong sense of her own deficiency in high breeding, and knowledge of the world, that had unnerved her: but, though unlearned and without accomplishments, she had a just notion of what is right, and well bred, and always felt, not only a contempt, but a sort of dislike for those, who could wantonly sport with the feelings of another. The behaviour, that overwhelmed her aunt with confusion, relieved Mabella from the fright, she had been thrown into, and recovering her presence of mind, she turned towards three ladies, who occupied the next table, and were particularly loud in their insolence, and, looking at them with some surprise, said to her aunt:

"I thought, aunt, that at these places, none were admitted, who did not know the common rules of civility! but I see I am mistaken!"

This was delivered with emphasis enough to give it effect, and gentleness

enough to interest those, who had any feelings, for the beautiful speaker, who, strong in conscious rectitude, and inoffensiveness, proceeded to sweeten her tea. A murmur of applause ran among the gentlemen, and a genteel looking young man, who had stood by to observe the entrance of the ladies, now advanced to Mrs. Glassington, and presenting her with his newspaper, begged that she would do him the favour to amuse herself with it. Mrs. Glassington accepted the paper, hoping that she was not preventing him from reading it himself! and the Miss Chatterers, (that was their name) the aunt, and two nieces, bursting into a loud laugh, said, they supposed the Captain knew the *common rules of civility.*

"I can't answer for always observing them, any more than my neighbours, Miss Charlotte," said the Captain; "but I shall be happy to give you any instruction that may initiate you, or your sister, in the science." "Lord God of heaven

bless me!" cried the aunt in a voice not unlike that of an old Jew, "why, what is all this impertinence, and taking liberties with the Miss Chatterers! Are people of our family to be talked to in this way, I wonder? I don't know the time, when there was not a Chatterer in the county, and to be exposed to have such liberties taken! Captain, let me tell you, that my two nieces are under *my* protection!"

"And a very proper Ægis!" answered the Captain, interrupting her: "but at present I am sure they look able to protect themselves, if any protection were wanted."

This whole conversation gave great delight to most of the company present, for the Miss Chatterers spared no one in the plenitude of their insolence, and to be in the house with them, and to hate to see them, was pretty much the same thing.

The reader may think this somewhat

extraordinary, when he is told that the two nieces were very handsome brunettes, with dark eyes, and a good deal of colour, and that their family and connexions were really respectable. They had the misfortune to be orphans with little or no provision, and Miss Chatterer, the elder, or as she was commonly called Jack Chatterer, had brought them up, and given them an education, such as it was. As all accomplishments, save music, which she thought indispensable, were from the narrowness of her circumstances, excluded from her plan, and as all useful occupations were considered as beneath that exalted rank, in which their own imaginations, rather than fortune, had placed them; these young ladies divided their time between the piano forte, and the productions lent out from a circulating library. Those hours not so spent were dedicated to dress, visiting, and flirtation, and the Miss Chatterers were never seen without a train of officers, or other idle

young men, after them, whom they knew how to allure, (for they were complete mistresses of the exercise of the eye) and whom they not unfrequently disgusted by their haughtiness, falsely by themselves called, dignity and reserve.

Mrs. Jack Chatterer was rather a remarkable woman in mind as well as in person; she not only had a thorough contempt for truth, but she openly professed it, and some of her friends affirmed, that this profession was the only one she ever made, that could be relied on! the only truth she ever spoke! Honesty stood on the same level with truth, in her opinion, and she made a point of never paying any bill till she was absolutely compelled to it. She knew that the fear of displeasing her connexions by using any coercive measures towards her, would deter many tradesmen from molesting her, and she openly gloried in setting the *vulgar brutes*, as she called

them, at defiance. Some tradesmen, who were less dependent upon what is called the *quality,* however, would not be denied; and these, as she said, "got their money, but they got her tongue, too!" It would very much have contributed to the peace of society, if they had kept her tongue safely under lock and key; but they could not work miracles. One honest cabinet maker, to whom Mrs. Chatterer owed between two and three pounds for repairs and et cæteras, regularly carried in his bill, once a quarter, during six years; and at last, thinking that if he took a receipt, and sent it in to her, she would be shamed out of the money, tried the experiment, and received in reply, "Mrs. Chatterer's compliments, and she was much obliged to him." The man remonstrated, but he could neither get receipt nor money, and the lady made all the parties she went into, during the next three months, merry

with the account of the trick she had played him.

It would be as tedious as endless to recount the many injustices she committed, or the menaces her friends used towards people who were loud in their complaints, and threats to compel her to pay! but such is the state of slavery in which those who depend on the caprice of others live, that they were very successful; and this worthy lady continued to live, not inelegantly, on an income that would not pay her house-rent, and furnish her with bread and potatoes.

It is not to be doubted that her nieces imbibed all the virtues and good principles of their worthy aunt; they hated, like her, to speak the truth; like her, they detested the idea of paying for any thing; like her, they gloried that the music master they had honoured by their patronage, had not received a farthing, either for lessons or books, during the

two last years; and, like her, they added, that they had turned the fellow off, for daring to ask for his bill; declaring, at the same time, that they had since hindered him of several pupils, to teach him good manners. All three had a mortal hatred to beautiful or accomplished females, and if rank and wealth were added to beauty and refinement, they would not have been sorry to hear the possessors had broken their necks, or been otherwise disposed of.

If the mind of Mrs. Chatterer was remarkable, (and we hope, for the sake of the fair sex, it was) her person was no less so; it being, as nearly as one can imagine such a thing, that of a female Falstaff; and this, with her loud, masculine, vociferating manner of speaking, probably procured her the title of Jack, which we have already mentioned, and which was often varied by the addition of Fat, or Blustering, as thus; Fat Jack, or Blustering Jack; and sometimes, by

way of pun on her name, Chattering Jack! She, however, lacked one thing that fat Jack Falstaff possessed, videlicet, wit! and its place was supplied by malice.

CHAP. IX.

A Harrogate Party.—A Warning to Widows; being a somewhat long, but not unamusing Chapter.

At the time our Purlbeck friends met Mrs. Chatterer and her nieces at Harrogate, those ladies were in pursuit of men of family and fortune, whom they might convert into husbands; but this was not the only reason for their visiting that place: indeed, it was too early in the season for the compaign to open! they had another, namely, to try the efficacy of the waters on the skin of Mrs. Chatterer, who, either from indulging too freely in much eating, or from bad blood, or some other cause, was terribly plagued with a very vulgar plebeian looking sort of eruption. The itching it produced was intolerable; and, in whatever part of her

body it was importunate, she indulged it with a hearty scratch, let who would, male or female, be present.

This propensity to what King Charles the Second, of worthy memory, called a royal indulgence, and would have appropriated solely to the sovereigns of the earth, rendered Fat Jack a very unpleasant neighbour to those condemned by the laws and regulations of the house to sit next her, and, added to her pride and insolence, made her almost, if not altogether, intolerable to the greatest part of the people there.

Among these were several who came from the town where she usually resided; but of these, with one solitary exception,* she took no notice, unless, indeed, to express her disgust at being compelled to sit at table with such a set of scum, as she called them; and, as the reader may suppose, if she had not done them that honour, they would willingly have excused her.

The lady we mentioned as an exception was called Petman by some, and O'Shauglanee by others, and for this there was a reason; indeed, there usually is for most peculiar customs; and, as we have no very pressing affairs on our hands, and our heroine is yet eating her breakfast, and it may amuse the reader! for all these ostensible reasons, and the real, though concealed one besides, we shall here give a short account of the celebrated Mrs. Petman.

This lady was the only child of her father, a man of an old and respectable family, which, though the members of it had always exercised some honourable profession, and made their talents useful to their neighbours, was still considered very genteel. As a young, gay woman, who would probably possess great wealth, and whose connexions were desirable, she received early and numerous flattering attentions from our sex, and might have married well; but discretion was

not her predominant qualification, and she gratified her love of admiration, always welcome to her, however fulsomely expressed, and from whomsoever paid, by keeping the crowd in good humour, and treating all by turns with little flattering encouragements. At length, before she was quite eighteen, she made a choice, and departed one morning to visit Gretna Green with her father's footman, who had no one qualification to recommend him, but a tolerable person.

The father behaved like a man of sense on this occasion; he received the happy couple on their return with a moderate degree of reproof, and, as Mr. Petman, though only the son of a common day-labourer, could read and write; (qualifications which, as in his youth there were neither Sunday schools, nor National, nor Lancasterian schools, we cannot account for his possessing) he admitted him to a share in his own professional business, and, by that means, gave him something

to do, and kept him out of mischief. The father lived many years, and the only fruit of the marriage being one girl, he divided his large property equally between the mother and daughter, leaving them the entire disposal of what fell to their share, without any controul from Mr. Petman.

The sudden gust of passion that had blown Mrs. Petman to Gretna Green, passed, to return no more! Her husband proved indifferent towards her, and after the birth of her daughter, they no longer troubled the same apartment, but each did what was right in his or her eyes! The house was literally divided into two dwellings, for neither would intrude on the other's premises, and except when they met by chance, they never saw each other. And now it was that the lady entered on a career of pleasure, that afforded her infinite gratification! She was the patroness of fiddlers and singers, the bespeaker of plays, the leader of fashions!

To be of Mrs. Petman's parties was to be "one of us," which, in that small place, was of the utmost importance; and not to be known to her, was a death-blow to gentility.

The reader will have guessed from what we have said, that Mrs. Petman had a passion for music, and for plays, and in these she occasionally indulged to excess. But these were not her only passions, and if she was celebrated among her numerous female friends for any one particular excellence, it was that of having fine handsome fellows for footmen. In this source of celebrity she particularly prided herself, and often would say to her visitors,

"Did you observe my fellow's legs? I think they are the handsomest I ever saw! he is altogether irresistible, and it gives me spirits to have such a man about me! The fellow knows his value!"

One would imagine, that such observations might have alarmed some of the

more discreet part of the community; but, so great is the power of money and rank, that whenever some too jocular male, or too censorious old maid was indiscreet enough to touch on the odd ways, and odd sayings of Mrs. Petman, the ladies were all up in arms, and declared it to be infamous to censure a woman, who lived on the best terms with her husband, gave the pleasantest parties in the town, and was, from her innocent gaiety, the very life and soul of all society! Nothing could stand against such popularity, and Mrs. Petman continued to indulge in domestic pleasures, till her daughter was the mother of seven or eight children, and till, to her great delight, it pleased God to make her a widow at the age of sixty.

Every thing with Mrs. Petman was a passion, whether it was the preference of a cap, or of a footman, and, when her husband died, her grief was so excessive, that her friends began to fear she would hardly survive him: she tore her hair,

and threw herself on the ground in despair, and railed at fate in "fair proper terms," and called for death to take her once more to the arms of her Matthew, and refused all food, for some time, at least, and concluded the whole ceremony by breaking from her attendants, and attempting to enter the room where he was laid out; and when her friends and attendants prevented her, and dragged her back to her own apartment, she made a dead faint.

From this faint she recovered time enough to write a letter, which letter was carried to the post office by a dear friend, who saw it written, and who undertook to seal it, and, as she kept a copy of it, which afterwards fell into our hands, we shall here present it to the reader; begging leave, at the same time, to assure him that it is an original.

To Captain Patrick O'Shauglanee, at Mr. ——'s, W—— D——.

"Dearest object of my aspirations,

"Though you cruelly denied me the joys my soul solicited, while I had only my person to offer you, and deprived my eyes of the rapture of beholding your material perfections, I cannot forget, that you were the chosen of my heart; and, as you are once more at liberty, I again offer you, not only my miserable self, but the disposal of my whole property. If you will become my second husband, (my first now lies dead in the house, alas!) you shall make your own terms, and dictate the settlements yourself. Should you consent, (you ought, to repay me for your former cruelties) go down to Scarborough as early as possible, I will meet you there as soon as I receive your summons. Direct, under cover, to my dear Mrs. D——, who will be faithful and true. Oh! my

O'Shauglanee, hasten to send peace and love, extatic thought! to the bosom of your ever admiring, and adoring, till death,

"Ann Petman.

"P. S. My feelings are overwhelming! Am I not alone in the world? Come! oh! come!!"

This precious morsel of female tenderness, and specimen of faithful affection, was addressed to a handsome young Irishman, who had been her footman two years before, and in consequence of his exceeding insolence to Mr. Petman, was by that gentleman kicked out of the house. Like a generous woman, however, Mrs. Petman did not lose sight of her protégé; she bought him a commission, and corresponded regularly with him, and though he married a wife, he did not lose her favour. This wife, as he informed her, died, and he was not so insensible to the

charms of a very handsome fortune, as to turn a deaf ear to such an offer as that from the gay widow. But before he went to Scarborough, he thought it advisable to know how Mr. Petman had disposed of his property, and to leave the lady time to settle such affairs, as were necessarily to be adjusted. It was discreet in him to do so, for Mr. Petman, like his father-in-law, had left every thing to be divided equally between his widow and daughter. This daughter was now the wife of a second husband, who with laudable justice took care his lady should not be deprived of a single thread belonging by right to her, and perhaps, a better subject for a scene in comedy could hardly be imagined, than the division of furniture, plate, china, wine, and stores of all kinds, produced. The partition was made with the greatest precision, and, at last, there remaining a ham only to be disposed of, neither

party would relinquish it; it was weighed, cut in two, and slices taken from the preponderating side, and at last made the scales even.

As soon as all these important matters were settled, this old Hebe hastened to meet her love, who, perhaps, fearful of alarming her, if he took all, she had, in the first burst of joy, offered, was contented to ask only for five hundred a year for life! he probably hoped, that he should afterwards secure the rest. An eminent lawyer prepared the marriage settlements with due secrecy, and a young lady, with whom Mrs. Petman was very intimate, was invited to be bridemaid.

As the lady's year of widowhood had not expired, the ceremony was as private as possible, and the town, when they came home, though somewhat amazed, flocked to pay their compliments to the happy pair.

And now Mr., or Captain O'Shaughlanee perceived the mistake he had made, for, when his bride's tender aspirations began to subside, he could not by any means persuade her to relinquish a farthing more of her property, than was already his own; from small bickerings on that head arose mighty quarrels, and the Captain, taking the law into his own hands, frequently flogged her, in a shamefully barbarous manner; and once or twice dragged her out of her bed, and into the midst of her own domestics, who did not dare to attempt to rescue her. Hatred, bitter implacable hatred, had now taken place of liking in the breast of Mrs. O'Shaughlanee, and she went to a magistrate, lodged a complaint against her husband, and swore that her life was in danger.

To this succeeded a determination to separate! The same legal friend, who had a few months before made the marriage

settlements, was now employed to draw up articles of separation, and a young divine offering his consolations (whether wholly spiritual or not, we cannot venture to say) to the lady, she bore her trials with great philosophy. Captain O'Shaughlanee, seeing, now, that he must make the best use of his time, ordered a post chaise, and contrived to carry off all the plate; but the reverend Adonis (a very ugly fellow) pursued him with a constable, and rescued the plate from that dissolution, to which it was destined.

And now began a scene of abuse and recrimination, to which we cannot do justice. O'Shaughlanee was accused of a thousand crimes he had never committed! It was remembered, all of a sudden, by the ladies, who had visited Mrs. O'Shaughlanee, that he had been her footman; and the young lady who had officiated as bride maid, as if she had never heard of it before, almost fainted

when she was told it, and vowed that she thought herself eternally contaminated by having appeared at the altar with a man, who had formerly been a footman, and was represented to her as an officer. She wrote a letter on the subject to Mrs. O'Shaughlanee, filled with very unlady-like reproaches, and that tender wife gave it to her husband, in order to vex him, and because he had always shewn particular attention to Miss Sniggins, lent her his horses, ridden out with her, and danced with her, and been a sort of constant attendant upon her.

It certainly did provoke him, and he sat down directly to answer it.

He began by informing the young lady, that the circumstance of his being a footman need not so excessively shock her pride, as he was, though reduced to that condition, of one of the best families in Ireland, and had the blood of kings flowing in his veins: but that, let him be

what he would, he was proud to boast that she had always shewn a particular predilection for his company, had accepted favours from him, borrowed his horses, and been glad to receive, even a kiss. That she might rely upon it he should not conceal circumstances, it was so gratifying to reveal, and that he was still her very humble servant.

This letter he was malicious enough to write in French, (he really was a man of some education) well knowing that neither she nor her mother could read that language, and that they must necessarily employ an interpreter: the thing happened as he supposed, and the world was merry with the delicate scruples of the genteel Miss Sniggins, who, like many others voting themselves *first rates* in small places, was remarkably vain and proud.

This letter, and some other affairs were hardly dispatched, when the Reve-

rend Mr. Bungler made a discovery by mere chance, that proved the ruin of O'Shauglanee, and this was, that his first wife was not dead, but was living in Hampshire. Mrs. Petman having transferred her aspirations partly to Mr. Bungler, and partly to her own coachman, took the happy occasion to be restored to freedom. O'Shaughlanee was taken up, tried for bigamy, and convicted; but whether he underwent the sentence of the law, or was by some means delivered from it, we know not. Mrs. Petman was now once more at liberty, and what is remarkable enough, O'Shaughlanee was no sooner out of her reach, but she would gladly have received him again, spite of the ill usage she had had! Such are the vagaries of passion! The Reverend Mr. Bungler, however, laboured to give her's a better direction, and though she had little tender wanderings, that considerably diminished her already broken fortune, she was now once more seriously

turning her thoughts to another permanent engagement. She had visited Harrogate, partly on the score of health, and partly on the score of pleasure, and she by no means found it unproductive of delight.

CHAP. X.

*Our Heroine's Simplicity.—A Fracas.—A Nip.—
A Peep at Doctor Drain.*

The amiable subject of our last chapter was absent from the room, on the morning when Mrs. Glassington and her niece made their first appearance at Harrogate; as she had thought proper to bathe, and breakfasted in her own apartment. Thither her dear friends, the Chatterers, hied to communicate what had passed, and to express their detestation of such low people, as were allowed to intrude into places where the gentry were assembled! a sentiment, in which Mrs. Petman assured them she quite participated. We shall, however, at present leave these ladies to the pleasing sensations emanating from their prevailing passions; and return to our heroine, whom we have too

long neglected, and who by no means felt herself so happy, as she had imagined she should, in seeing a great many strangers, and novel scenes: as she sat at her breakfast, she wished herself back again at Purlbeck, and sighed to think that her aunt proposed to stay a whole month. By degrees, however, this diminished, and curiosity, of which Mabella had no small share, prompted her, in spite of her timidity, to look round at the different groupes, and individuals still left in the room, and to conjecture who they could possibly be.

One family in particular fixed her attention. It consisted of an old gentleman and lady, with three young ladies, and one young man.

The father (so she conjectured him to be) was a thick-set florid looking man, with sleepy half-shut eyes, a large stomach, a very short neck, and high shoulders. He wore very handsome clothes, though their make was not of the newest

fashion; a light brown wig, with a turned up front, and three rows of curls in beautiful order above each other; and exercised a very active knife and fork in an attack on the various good things that covered his table, and on which his whole attention, and the united energies of mind and body were entirely fixed.

His lady, as congenial minds will do, made almost, if not quite, equal exertions, and seemed, in every respect, a proper partner for him. She was tall and stout, and in any room where Miss Chatterer did not come, would have been called gross, coarse, and unwieldy, but by the side of that lady she really did not look so monstrous.

Her dress was of the very best and handsomest materials, and she wore on her cap and her gown such a profusion of handsome lace, as Mabella had never seen in the course of her life. This, [illegible]ed to her ear-rings, broaches, gold c[illegible] and bracelets, convinced Mabella that she

must be a person of rank, perhaps a Countess, as there was nobody else so fine in the whole room, and as her daughters were likewise habited in the same extravagant way. They were three very plain girls, with their mother's high cheek bones, wide mouths, and large staring black eyes; and their natural awkwardness was increased by having, in compliance with the then fashion, shortened their waists in the extreme, and in compliance with their own lazy dispositions, indulged in stooping till they might, without much exaggeration, be said to sit double.

Excepting the noise their jaws and lips made, no small one it is true, and to which their knives and spoons, cups and saucers, played an accompaniment, they might be said to be very quiet, and perfectly still; the young ladies, indeed, did occasionally whisper, look round at the gentlemen, and titter, but nothing they said was audible at the distance Mabella

sat from them, and she hardly perceived that they spoke at all. She thought, if they were titled ladies, they must have learnt to dance, and she wondered if they had, that their master had not made them more upright; a thing, about which Mrs. Glassington was incessantly talking.

But by far the most singular and interesting person of this group, was the young heir to the title, whose person was the counterpart of that of his father, only three times as fat; and he had a large double chin, that even his enormous cravat did not conceal. His hair was black, and exceedingly coarse, and it stood like huge bristles on his head. Beneath his waistcoat there appeared the collars of three others, at least, and he wore a quizzing-glass, suspended by a broad black ribbon.

As soon as the heat of the engagement was a little over, and he had in part satisfied his hunger, he took up the newspaper that lay beside him, but before he began to read it, he put his glass to his

eye, and examined Mabella, who was at that moment examining him with no less attention, and whose eye sunk in utter dismay under his stare, and the grin of self-conceited satisfaction that accompanied it. He opened his paper, and pretended to read it, but he looked off every six words, to ogle Mabella, who was taking great care not to see him at all.

This care on her part convinced him that she had fallen in love with him, and he thought, as she doubtless was feeling the beginning of that passion, he never failed to create in the breasts of all young females, he would fix the matter at once, by letting her hear, that his mental qualifications were equal to his bodily. A good opportunity, he thought, presented itself, for Mrs. Glassington was returning the paper to the officer, so he pushed back his chair with such violence, that it gave a loud crack, and with his newspaper in his hand, began to cross the room to that side where Mabella was sitting.

Though his thighs were so fat, that he walked with his legs much farther apart than was either beautiful or graceful, he moved with some velocity, and would soon have reached the table; but his father, who had now likewise finished his breakfast, called after him in a voice that made the room ring again,

"Tom! Tom Ferment, I say! what, lad, thou's carried off t' newspaper! Bring it back, will to'?"

Turning round to his father, Mr. Thomas Ferment answered, with a smile, "Aye! Aye! bud I mun have credit! you shall have t' paper when I've done wi'it." This, as may readily be supposed, made his father very angry, and he got up from the table to take the contested paper by force; but, forgetting that the best part of valour is discretion, he unadvisedly leaned too heavily on his side of the tea-table, and overturned the whole of its contents.

It was lucky for the family of the Fer-

ments, that the hot water, which came in in the tea-urn, had been all transferred to their stomachs, so that it was now not possible for it to scald the legs of any of the party; but the contents of the slop basin took the right direction, and wet Mr. Ferment's clean lamb's-wools, and filled the shoe of his right foot. The good gentleman uttered tremendous oaths, vowing that he was scalded to death; his wife wiped her silk gown with the dry end of the table-cloth, scolding furiously all the time; and the young ladies, who by sitting on the opposite side, escaped tolerably well, laughed heartily, and enjoyed the fun. In this their brother joined them, and seeing Mabella start up to run to their assistance, he grasped her rudely by the arm to prevent her, and cried, "No, no, Miss! let the old gentleman fend for himself! he's able; hale, strong, and hearty, as you see, and a devil of a blusterer, when t' fit's on him. Lord bless you, Miss, he'll go *scrawming*

(probably he meant scrambling) about, and soon click up t' nippers, and t' spoons! That's it, Dad! at 'em again!" Mabella was not only terrified and offended by being thus rudely laid hold on, but she was actually hurt by the violence of Mr. Thomas Ferment's grasp, which made her turn exceedingly sick; and her struggles to free herself being unavailing, she was overpowered, and fainted. Her assailant's attention being fixed on the efforts his relations were making, and his head turned towards them, he did not instantly perceive her situation, and she would have sunk to the ground, even while he held her arm, had not her aunt and Captain Croker caught her as she fell. All this passed in the course of a minute, and indeed almost instantaneously, and as instantaneously the attention of the whole company was diverted from the Ferments, and fixed on our heroine, whose recovery was retarded by the want of fresh air, every body crowding round

her to gaze or offer a remedy. Among the rest was the author of her misfortune, who swore in proper gentlemanly terms, that his *nip* could not have hurt her, for that he hardly touched her, and, he dare say, if nhey looked at her arm, they would find it as white as her face! An old gentleman, who had not hitherto spoken, now raised his voice, and said, from the table where he sat, "If you would save the young lady's life, you should give her air, and open a vein!"

"Aye, aye! where the Devil is old Drain gone?" cried Mr. Tom Ferment, "he's the man for bleeding; run somebody, and fetch him." And now Mrs. Glassington, who was half distracted, and let Mabella lie on the shoulder of Captain Croker, tore open the gown sleeve of her niece, as if to prepare her for the operation, and discovered to her great horror, that Mr. Tom Ferment had left the marks of his monstrous fingers so deeply impressed on the upper part of Miss Nor-

manburn's arm, that the place was turning black, and that the pain must have been intense. She darted a look of contempt and anger at the perpetrator, and uttered the word "Brute," with an emphasis that made his ears tingle, and brought a larger quantity of blood into his face than usual. The word brute was repeated by every one present, and bandied backward and forward with the addition of some epithets, not at all more pleasing to the large person to whom they were applied, than the simple title would have been; and he began a justification of himself in so loud a key, that it probably, aided by hartshorn, contributed to restore Mabella to her senses. She had just opened her eyes, and begun to exhibit some colour in her lips, when a cry of "Here's the doctor," ran through the assembly; and way being instantly made for him, he shuffled up to Miss Normanburn, followed by a waiter with a wash-hand basin, while he himself held a

lancet, ready to operate on whomsoever might require his assistance. If the reader, however, is desirous to learn what were the operations performed by Doctor Daniel Drain, alias the Bleeding Doctor, we must request his attention to the following Book, which probably may contain matter, not less extraordinary, or less worthy of attention, than this we are on the point of concluding.

END OF BOOK IV.

BOOK V.



CHAP. I.

An Assurance of our scorning Imitation.—Dr. Drain's ruling Passion.—How exercised at Harrogate.—The tender Efforts and Acts of paternal Love.—A Menace.

Before we proceed in delineating the person, features, or countenance of Mr. Drain, (who, though by courtesy styled Doctor, was in fact a simple apothecary) or to describe what actions he performed, or most delighted to perform, we must beg leave to assure the reader, that the suspicion he has by this time conceived, that he is about to be pestered with a miserable copy of the illustrious and immortal Sangrado, (whom all, who are so unfashionable as to have read Gil

Blas, know, to their great satisfaction) is erroneous. No, we scorn to present even excellence at second hand, and shall be contented to transcribe only from that great book of nature, which not only in every page, but in every line, word, and letter, presents us with something novel and various. Indeed, much might be written, and said on this subject; and, if well written, and well said, the disquisition would be no less delightful and surprising, than striking and instructive; but, in that case, it would infallibly draw upon us the anger and eternal hatred of all those numerous writers, who, like undertakers, fatten on the spoils of the dead, rather than be at the trouble of consulting the volume, that ever lies open before their optics; and, in the opposite case, that is, if ill done, it would cause to be showered down on our defenceless heads such a torrent of ridicule, that the pain occasioned by a shower-bath would be a nothing in comparison. For these rea-

sons, we here omit it, not, however, pledging ourselves, that we never shall attempt it, for as we become more callous to the world's censure, and ridicule, we may in time resemble certain personages, who gratify their humours in every instance, and trample public opinion, that formidable leader of reform, under their feet. But to return.

Doctor Daniel Drain resembled Sangrado in no other instance, but the one of being in the habit of bleeding his patients profusely, and in all disorders; and this he did, not as the Spanish physician did, from having perfectly convinced himself of the exceeding and universal utility of the practice, but from a decided passion for performing that one operation. Sangrado, after much reading and reflection, had satisfied his understanding, not a common rate one, it seems, that copious bleedings, and no less copious draughts of warm water, would effectually relieve mortals from every

malady it was possible for them to be afflicted with, and in this we may venture to assert he was right, ninety-nine times out of the hundred; but Drain had neither studied, nor reflected on the subject! with the same passionate appetite, that one man incessantly handles a fiddlestick, another a paint brush, a third a dice box, or a pack of cards, and a fourth a knife and fork, or his sparkling glass; or with a still more ardent one, if one more ardent can be found, did Drain handle his lancet! he plunged it with excessive delight into the veins of his neighbours, and when he had exhausted such of them as came within his reach, he would, rather than not bleed at all, bleed himself!

If any of our numerous readers are inclined to consider this character as a specimen of ultra-exaggeration, we can only give them the word of honour of an author, that it is none! Many yet alive remember the original, from whom it is drawn; some with grief, for having

unwittingly deprived them of their heart's treasures, others with gratitude, for having released them from tyrants, some with disgust, and some with a mixture of pity, wonder, and ridicule, that never fails to make them laugh, the moment he is mentioned. Of this great man, however, we shall intersperse some anecdotes, as well as a more particular description, in the course of this history, and having that intention, we will now return to Miss Normanburn, whom we left in some danger of suffering under the well-practised lancet of the redoubtable Drain.

Mabella had exchanged the protection of Captain Croker for that of her aunt, and intimated a wish to retire from the company, when Doctor Drain reached her; he was proceeding to seize her arm, and entwine it with a bandage he pulled from his pocket, but the poor terrified girl hurried from him, uttering a faint scream, and with the assistance of her aunt, was making the best of her way to the door.

This contempt was more than the blood-lover could well bear: he caught at her gown rather rudely, and hastily, and cried;

"Hoity toity, Mistress mine! why, how now? sit down, I say, and be thankful that there is a man who knows every refinement phlebotomy is capable of! was not I sent for to you?"

"Oh no, no, no!" answered Mabella.

"And who then? who is it?" asked he, looking through his spectacles at the surrounding individuals. Poor Mabella certainly was not in a jesting humour, nor had she the least design to set Drain on attacking any body; but her eye at that moment seeing Mr. Thomas. Ferment, who was unfeeling enough to grin at her dismay, she pointed at him, and cried, "Oh that mad monster!"

And now while Mrs. Glassington, as well as some others, endeavoured to prevail on Mabella to be bled, as a safe precautionary measure, and while her per-

turbation was exceedingly increased by these endeavours, so much so, that her aunt and another lady led her off to her room, Drain seized the hand of Tom Ferment, and cried;

"Mad? bleeding alone will cure him! off with his coat! off with his coat! dabbishit!" (his mode of swearing) "how he writhes and gurns, till the sweat runs like a stream of blood down his forehead! dabbishit! will nobody help? here, Billy Waiter! clap down the basin, and strip off his coat!"

Passion to be thus attacked prevented Tom from replying to this, except by raising his fist in a menacing attitude; and the waiter, judging from his gestures and the horrid faces he made, that he was really mad, and having, besides, implicit faith in the Doctor, who had attended his wife during ten days after her lying-in, and would certainly have cured her, had she not died through weakness, and daily bleedings! the waiter, who was

a stout athletic man, laid firmly hold of one arm, calling out to a brawny Leeds clothier to help him on the other side, and, in spite of his mighty efforts, efforts that would not have disgraced a young elephant, they actually threw him down, and tore his coat from his back. By this time, the room was cleared of all the females, including Mrs. and the Misses Ferment, who had generously left the poor old gentleman to make the best of the overset table; and several men, postillions, footmen, waiters, and the ostler, attracted by the ever-enchanting din of battle, had flocked in to occupy their places. These people were immediately informed that the patient was mad, an assertion that either seeing or hearing him would confirm; and, indeed, they were quite convinced, that such was the case: they good-humouredly lent their assistance towards securing him, and though he uttered words, much too tremendous to be inserted here, they held

his whole person in such complete durance that he had no chance to escape! his unwilling, but well-handled arm was submitted, shorn of its shirt, to the lancet of Drain, who eyed the spouting stream with more satisfaction than an alderman does a good dinner; and after taking about thirty ounces of blood from him, said, it would be better to stop that orifice, and open the temple.

And now that this renowned commander in the field of blood had his victim prostrate, and in a great measure rendered tame before him; now that he had entered into the full spirit of the conquest, and viewed with peculiar delight the plump broad body of the youth, which evidently contained many pounds of that fluid he most delighted, with enraptured eye, to contemplate, in all human probability he would not have been contented to confine himself to the head, but have ranged in unbounded wantonness over the luxuriant field, had not a small

accident arrested him, at the very moment that he was selecting a fresh lancet wherewith to pierce the beating temple of poor Tom! but in order to account for this, we must step back a moment, and shew how it was produced.

The father of Mr. Tom Ferment exceedingly resented his son's behaviour, when the table fell; and in order to shew his anger, he determined to leave the young gentleman to fight his own battles, and not in any way to interpose: accordingly, as soon as he had freed himself from the broken cups and saucers, he retired to change his stockings, fearful of catching cold, and chuckling to himself at the trimming his disrespectful child was likely to receive. He did not, on this occasion, regret that English fathers had not the same power the Roman fathers possessed, and this, not from an enlightened way of thinking, but simply because he never in his life had heard of any such power! but he did

grieve that Tom was now too big, and too strong, to be horsewhipped or knocked down at pleasure, and he kept repeating to himself, as he walked towards the stairs,

"I whope they'll lick him to the tune of nineteen to the dozen!" Three or four times he audibly repeated this, when he was met by the chambermaid, who was bringing down a large slop pail full of an agreeable variety of offerings from the different apartments, and as his person was large, he cautiously stopped to let the woman pass. She had reached the bottom step, when she set down her burden in the passage, and struck with the repeated cries of murder, now growing fainter and fainter, as the blood was flowing, she exclaimed,

"Lod a marcy! if they isn't a slaftering him!" at the same time running off to see what was the matter. The same cries of murder, the longer intervals at which they were uttered, and the girl's

exclamation, to say nothing of parental affection, that now, doubtless, began to scorn the broken cups and saucers, and to urge this tender father by its powerful workings to forgive and succour his son! some or all of these motives, suddenly determined Mr. Ferment to return to the field of action; and as a man naturally arms himself with the first weapon that presents itself, and Mr. Ferment, having been a brewer, was not quite unused to carrying buckets, he snatched the slop-pail, and made the best of his way back again. He arrived by the side of Drain at the moment we have described, for every body made way for him, and lifting the sweet and rich mixture, discharged the whole with wonderful activity and effect on the triumphant Doctor, who, attracted by the shuffling of the feet of those behind him, had just turned up his spectacled face to that of Mr. Ferment.

Cover, pail, and contents were thrown

from the hands of this enraged parent; the former maliciously slipped between the assailer and the assailed, while the contents bedewed and gilded the face and person of the latter, as well as those of the poor patient, and the people who surrounded him! as to the pail, it took such a fancy to the head of the doctor that there it stuck, rendering him almost unable to breathe, and totally unable to articulate, to the great amusement of all those persons who escaped (they were not many) from the bespattering.

How long the unhappy Drain might have suffered under the novel crown, that at the same time, like some other crowns, ornamented and gilded the head, while it endangered the life of its wearer; how long, had it not been for the fortunate presence of the Chambermaid, we know not! nay, we tremble, even to conjecture; for it might have remained till it occasioned the loss of that valuable life!

but happily Patty was nigh at hand, and moved no less by compassion for the little Doctor, than affection to her own pail, she elbowed the company on each side, and having made way to him, relieved him just in time to prevent him from being stifled. The first effort she made to raise the pail from his head was, however, unsuccessful, for, somehow, in his agonies he had hooked his long chin into the hollow part, just beneath the rim, while the thickness of his wig, adding to the length of the head, the whole was jammed fast between the said hollow, and the opposite side, and the head thus fixed with the face upwards, maintained its position, in spite of the tug Patty gave the pail. Poor Drain's neck was almost dislocated with the girl's jerk, but, happily for him, it had forced his tye wig to give way a little, and on her second attack, she succeeded in freeing him at the same moment from the pail, the

wig, and a large portion of skin from his chin.

Perhaps, nothing could well be imagined more ludicrous, at the same time more mournful, than the appearance of Doctor Drain, when thus deprived of his coronet, and his wig. His little eyes were closed, and the entire face was covered with a yellowish brownish mixture, which, like gilding, made it resplendent, while his bare, and perfectly bald head, having had the protéction of his wig, remained free from pollution. He spit, and sputtered, making fruitless efforts to speak, or to see, for some seconds, and, had not Patty completed her kindness by fetching a bottle of water that stood on a sideboard, and throwing it on his face to cleanse it, he might still have been a serious sufferer by the accident: she soon, however, enabled him to open his eyes, and to articulate, and pronounce with considerable emphasis, a round dozen of

oaths, and the first use he made of his sight was to seek his patient and his lancet; and the first assertion he made was, that he would drain *his heart's blood.*

CHAP. II.

A Father's Address.—Hints on writing History, with a FACT *on that Subject.*

THE bustle occasioned by the unexpected attack of Mr. Ferment, senior, had by this time attracted the landlord and landlady, as well as several people, who were not properly inhabitants of the house; and when Drain began to see, his unhappy patient was already raised from the floor, and placed in a chair, and the landlady herself, holding her nose with one hand, was wiping his gilded face with the other; while his father was reading him a lecture on his violence and folly, and telling him that he might be thankful he had a father to protect him, though he did treat him with such disrespect; adding, "Thou sees, Tom, what thou's brow't o' thysell wi' thy freaks!

why, if it warn't for t' sh—t at sticks upo' thy feace, thou would look as white as yeast, frae having thy blood draw'd frae thee, by that auld butcher, there! Bud thou desarves non better! for, bating at thy father's thy father, and as warm a man as ony i' t' country, thou knaws I'se to be chosen alderman next vacancy, and auld Jobson can't live lang."

What reply Mr. Tom Ferment might have thought proper to make to this sensible and truly affectionate expostulation, had he been in a condition to reply, we will not venture to conjecture, as we love not to put into the mouths of our characters, any thing but what they really utter: a rule, which, if adhered to by more grave and weighty historians, would considerably shorten and simplify many ponderous tomes, that now load the shelves of libraries, whence they do not descend once in half a century.

And here, though the persons, whose adventures we are recording, are in no

very agreeable situation, yet we cannot refrain from satisfying the laudable curiosity of those individuals, who, not being very conversant in the composition of histories, are at a loss to conjecture, where and whence the modern historian draws his information! While, therefore, Mr. Ferment, senior, is concluding his address, the landlady wiping his son's face, and Drain seeking his lancet, which he had let fall when attacked with the pail, we will relate an anecdote perfectly genuine, and which may serve to throw some light on the matter: we had it from the gentleman in whose words we will give it to the reader; and who was exceedingly provoked at having been thus, in spite of himself, made to impose on the public.

"On my return from the peninsula," said Captain ——, "I went to visit some friends in the county of ——, and, being within a short distance of the celebrated poet and historian ——, to whom

I had an introduction, I one morning rode over to see him. I was fortunate enough to find him at home, and the name of my friends procured me an interview, which was very agreeable to me, and during which the gentleman made many inquiries respecting the state of the Peninsula, and the different actions, in which I had been engaged. I was, of course, pleased to narrate, especially as I found that Mr. ——, instead of being, as formerly, attached to ridiculous democratic notions of freedom, and such nonsense, was now a most violently loyal subject, and had a proper contempt for the visionary sentiments, he had once indulged in. I told him a variety of anecdotes that passed current among us abroad, respecting the baseness, cowardice, rapacity, and treachery of the French, and to which were opposed other anecdotes descriptive of Spanish honour, British valour, and generosity, but for none of which, either on one side or the other, I could

vouch, as authentic. Guess my surprise, when Mr. —— took up his pen, and desiring me to have the goodness to repeat again what I had told him, that he might give it to the public, in the History of Spain that he was now preparing for the press, arranged his papers, in order to commit my information to writing.

"I was exceedingly astonished, not conceiving it possible that any one who wrote history, could think of inserting as facts, the mere anecdotes of a day, related by an officer, who was a stranger to him, of whose veracity he could not have had any proof, and who had not vouched for the truth, or even credibility of these reports; and I not only expressed my surprise to him, but I begged to be excused from, in any way, contributing to mislead the public, or palming upon them what was, probably, if not entirely false, much exaggerated. His answer was very remarkable. It was: 'Sir, your informa-

tion is inestimable! it will be the jewel in my history, for I have it, not from hearsay, but from an eye-witness; a man, who has fought the battles of legitimacy, and loyalty, against the sanguinary, treacherous monster, whose ambition has sacrificed millions of lives, and whose very existence is a curse to humanity! Your information, Captain, is inestimable! I must again beg you to repeat it! I will give the respective anecdotes the full force of contrast, and all that kind of thing, and happy will it be for succeeding generations, that by your visit to me this morning, I have been enabled to embody in my laborious work, facts that will make Democrats blush, if they ever blush but with blood; and convince the admirers of French characters, and French principles, that both are disgraces to humanity.' I found that he was resolved to insert my anecdotes, so I obliged him by repeating them; and really, they now make a formidable appearance in

his History, being scientifically arranged, with the full force of contrast, as he said."

Such was the communication of our gallant, and honest-hearted friend, and he accompanied it with some very sound, and wholesome observations on the folly, as well as dishonesty, of such a proceeding. "If," said he, "the man had been writing a poem, or a romance, his proceeding would have been all very well, and my anecdotes in that case, lawful prize; but, when a man gives a work to the world as a history, and vouches for the authenticity of his matter, it is a downright fraud to insert things, that even the narrator tells him he does not entirely believe. I shall make no secret of my part in this matter, and, perhaps, Mr. ——— may in time learn, that the old proverb is very true, and that 'Honesty is the best policy.'"

CHAP. III.

In which the History returns to Doctor Drain. —The Termination of the Battle of the Lancet.

WE were not willing to add any thing to what our friend the Captain said in the last chapter, and we shall now leave our readers to digest it, and form their own conclusions, and return, ourselves, to the party in the breakfast room at Harrogate.

While Drain was seeking his lancet, and vowing vengeance, the landlord was endeavouring to clear the room of the persons who had no business there, and he succeeded so well (being aided by the intolerable stench the slop pail had occasioned) that there soon remained none but his own assistants, and parties concerned, and the old gentleman, who had originally been the cause of the whole

disaster, by advising bleeding to Miss Normanburn; and who had, during the bustle, stood as immovable as a statue, with his back to the fire-place, and his two hands clasped together before him, hanging like a weight, as if to keep his long bony arms in their usual position. This gentleman, whose name was Barnacle, was an oddity in his way, having passed several years in the early part of his life in Portugal, where he was established as a wine merchant, and, in consequence of the liking he took to the habits and manners of the Portuguese, being now a sort of mixed animal, neither English nor Portuguese.

He had a large nose and harsh features, and had many years practised the most rigid gravity of aspect and manner. Yet he was neither morose nor disagreeable, for he had great goodness of heart, and a large portion of knowledge, not, perhaps, well arranged, but always sensibly communicated. His dress consisted of

a suit of broad cloth, made with broad stiff skirts, in the mode of fifty years ago, and he wore a large broad hat, that looked as if it had once been turned up in front. His attitude was what we have already described, and his shoulders were now fixed so high, and so near his ears, that his neck was lost between them, and his head seemed fixed on the trunk, as if nature had forgotten the intervening support.

Mr. Barnacle having lived in Lisbon, was not by any means so incommoded by the smell that had served to drive out others, as to be tempted to lose the remainder of a scene, which, though he had not moved a muscle of his face, had exceedingly diverted him. With the same immovable gravity he listened while Drain having found his lancet, went flourishing up to old Ferment, (who displayed considerable nimbleness in popping behind his son's chair), and addressed him thus:

"Aye, aye! Mr. Ferment, you may slink! but, dabbishit! if I don't draw your blood! stand out of my way, landlord, or you'll repent it!"

"What, you'll tak my life, you auld weasel you, will you?" cried old Ferment; "tak nuotice, every body, he's threatened my life, and I'll tak my david on't afuore any magistrate i' t' county. I'll nab you, you auld villain!"

While this was uttered, Drain was trying to get at him, but was prevented by a waiter, and his rage increasing, he answered, still flourishing his lancet in the air, "And I'll nab you, as you call it, master Coculus Indicus! you made the first assault, and threw the nasty scourings of your own overcharged bowels on my defenceless head! even at the very moment when I was exercising the most useful part of my profession, in relieving the young madman, your son, from that repletion of blood, that had mounted to his brain, and deprived him of his senses.

Pay me for my trouble, old poison-monger, and for my wig, that will never be sweet again, or I'll sue you for the debt."
"Sue, and be d—d to you," cried the now reviving Tom; "you shall never have a farthing out of the Ferments, no, not if it would save your life, you old rascal! But you shall have *law!* law enough, for robbing me of my blood, sirrah! you'll have a fick higher than you look for, old Blood; the Black Act ull touch you! and it is not long to t' size."

"Size! what you would stifle a man with filth, and make a walking middin of him, and then hang him, for bleeding you, when you called for him to do so!" cried Drain, somewhat frightened.

"I call thee? not I," answered Tom: "but thou'll be hanged for murder, for I feel I shall never come about again." He here burst into a violent flood of tears, and Drain, trying again to get at him, cried, "Not come about again? let me bleed you again, and you'll be well di-

rectly." This fresh attempt brought old Ferment out from his hiding-place, and he called loudly for a constable to secure the murderer, who seemed determined to have the heart's blood of his son. Drain vowed he would, if it was only to be revenged for the calumnies uttered against him, and he made such serious display of his bloody intentions, that the waiter, who was set to keep him off, was under the necessity of arming himself with a chair, with the four legs of which he kept the enraged Drain at bay.

While he was thus engaged, the landlord advised, that the two Mr. Ferments should retire to another apartment, as then, he dare say, the Doctor would soon be pacified, and Tom, wiping his eyes, rose from his chair with the assistance of the landlord and his wife, and, preceded by his father, walked slowly by that part of the room, where Mr. Barnacle was standing, towards a door that led to the back part of the house, at the same time

uttering sundry ohs! and ahs! that seemed to come from his very back-bone. When he had nearly reached Mr. Barnacle, that gentleman said to him in his usual formal manner, "I fancy you are hurt, Sir?"

"Fancy!" replied Tom, bursting out afresh into tears, "it's no fancy, Mr. Barnacle, I am a dead man, I feel; but, if I live, I'll never forgive that old murderer, or the girl that set him on."

"That sentiment is anti-christian, Mr. Thomas," replied Barnacle, "and if you should die in it, as seems probable, you would indubitably go to the black-hole in h—ll." "D—me! what's that to you?" cried Tom, forgetting his weakness, and removing the arm that leaned on Mrs. Drawmore, the landlady, to brandish his fist in the air.

"Nothing!" answered Barnacle, coolly.

"No, I think not, indeed," cried Tom. "I have a right to go to h—ll, if I like, and it's nowt to nobody!"

"It is not," answered Barnacle. Tom

was proceeding, when his father, who had reached the door, called out to him to come along, and not stand talking like a fool! to which the obedient son answered, he was no more a fool than his father; and appealed to Barnacle, if it was not true.

"Sir," replied Barnacle, "I should be loth to arbitrate in so near a matter."

"And what do you mean by that, old Hum?" cried Tom, very captiously.

"My meaning is not worth the inquiry," said Barnacle. "No, I believe not," cried Tom, misunderstanding him, "no more than your help is; I do believe you was the first person began this hurly burly, by calling for that old devil, Bill has pinned up in the corner there, and when he and his complishes pulled me down to murder me, you stood by, and never helped me, master Barnacle. If I die, you'll come in as a complish, depend upon it."

"You'll certainly die," said Barnacle,

with an unmoved countenance. This silenced Tom, who was much inclined to quarrel with him, and again threw him into a trembling fit; he again wept, and proceeded towards the door, which his father had left open for him, and would have made a happy exit, had not the arrival of fresh company attracted the eye of Bill the waiter, who in a moment threw down his chair, and ran out to receive them, while Drain, making a spring forward, attempted to catch hold of all that remained of the garments of Tom Ferment; but the exclamation that he uttered when advancing, alarmed that delicate young gentleman, and in a moment, forgetting his weakness, he rushed from the room, and clapped to the door after him; of this Drain was not aware in time,—he darted against the closed door with a violence that almost flattened his nose to his face, and fell back in a state of perfect insensibility. He was immediately carried to bed, or rather into his

bed-room, for he was too much polluted to be laid on any bed, till he had been cleansed, and a physician, then practising at Harrogate, was sent for to attend him.

CHAP. IV.

Regrets.—Speculations.—Hopes.—How to pass Time agreeably.—News of the Combatants.

WE will now return to Miss Normanburn, the innocent cause of the disasters we have recounted, who found herself so much indisposed, that Mrs. Glassington began to fear a relapse, and that she should be under the necessity of sending for a physician to Mabella : an expensive remedy, that ill-accorded with the state of the family purse. These two fears, and they were both very painful fears, were not the only uneasinesses that preyed on the poor woman's mind ; she foresaw, that if her niece did not gain strength, but grew more feverish, she should herself be under the painful necessity of watching in a sick room, instead of mixing with the company in the place, and attending the

balls; and that, thus, the only opportunity she had enjoyed, since her widowhood, of bringing her charms to market, would be entirely lost.

This train of thought, with all its regrets, having taken full possession of her, she began first to wish Mabella might be better in the evening, then to suspect, there was more fright and pettishness than real injury in the case, and lastly, to determine, that she should not indulge any such whims, but should dress and go down to dinner. "If she does not," thought this anxious aunt, "I must be shut up in this room with her, for it won't be decent to leave her, and I might, in that case, as well be at Purlbeck! It would not be doing right by myself, especially after the extraordinary civility of that young officer, who certainly shewed me a marked politeness this morning, and who seems a very well-bred, sensible, pleasant man. I should think, he was about my own age. I wonder what his

name is! But I'll soon know when this poor child wakes."

It was so long since Mrs. Glassington had indulged in any pleasant speculation of this nature, that was not purely imaginary, except, indeed, in the case of Middlemist, which had its hot and cold fits, that now she had, as it were, got a footing, she made way surprisingly; and though Mabella continued to slumber, and to toss, and to moan, full two hours, the time seemed to pass so quickly with Mrs. Glassington, that she could hardly believe her senses, or her watch, when she looked at it.

Mrs. Glassington was one of those good people, who easily believe, that what they wish will certainly come to pass; and, having set out with the idea that the officer was struck with her appearance, she next wished it might be so, and at last believed it would be so. She did not know either his name, his family, or his fortune, it is true! but she saw, that he

was intimate with those who took the lead in the house; he was easy in his address, and she hoped that it would be found that his connexions were respectable.

In consequence of this train of thought, and the agreeable visions it brought along with it, she was in perfect good-humour, when her niece asked her to order some toast and water, as she felt very thirsty; and when Betty made her appearance, she asked for the toast and water in a tone of such perfect gentleness and good-humour, that the girl, who came in with a bounce, expecting a haughty reception, was suddenly softened, and making a curtsey, retired to fetch the beverage desired.

"There now. Bell," cried Mrs. Glassington, drawing the very opposite conclusion to the true one, "you see, my dear Bell, how necessary it is to know one's own dignity, 'and to let these common folks know it too! If I had not given that

trollop a good lecture last night, she would not have been half so civil."

"Would not she?" said Mabella, hardly hearing what her aunt said.

"No, certainly, child!" answered Mrs. Glassington, "not half! But now we shall get on very well, I dare say. I am quite sorry, Bell, at this fright you have had, my dear! It's a bad beginning; but many a bad beginning makes a good ending, and who knows what lucky events it may produce? You see the rudeness of those girls, and the fat old woman, brought me the polite attentions of that genteel officer; I must ask his name."

"Yes, aunt, but I don't see what good can come to me from being pinched so unmercifully," answered Mabella. "I declare, my blood runs cold, when I think of that fat monster, and that horrid-looking man, with his lancet and his bandage! I hope he does not lodge in the house."

"Lord! my dear, never mind where *he* lodges," said Mrs. Glassington: "and as to the other man, we can easily keep out of his way: but I can't think, Bell, how it was that you came to run to meet him; for you had jumped up before he pinched you, I know."

"I was running to help the old gentleman, and the ladies, when the table fell," answered Mabella, "and the unfeeling creature held me to prevent my going! he is a hateful creature!"

"I wonder who he is?" cried Mrs. Glassington. Mabella smiled here, and when asked, why? answered, that at first she had fancied he was a young lord, from the fine clothes the family wore; but that his vulgarity shewed he was nobody of consequence.

"There, child, you may be mistaken, for many people of consequence like to be vulgar, to shew their independence," said Mrs. Glassington.

To this observation Mabella was be-

ginning to reply, when Betty entered with the toast and water; and while Mabella was drinking some of it, Mrs. Glassington asked, who the man was, who had pinched Miss Normanburn so rudely.

"Why, Ma'am, it's young Squire Ferment; but he'll never pinch noabody noa muore, they say!" replied Betty. When asked what she meant? she gave an account of what happened after the ladies quitted the room, with much exaggeration, and the addition that Drain had cut the Squire's temples open; and that, after that, the old Squire had emptied the slop-pail on Drain's head, and that if it had not been for her fellow-servant, Patty, the Doctor would have been choked, having swallowed a great deal of muck; and that then there was a battle between the old Squire and the Doctor, and the Doctor was pushed against the wall, and his nose broke, and now he was ill in one room, and young Squire Ferment in another, and neither expected to live, as

Doctor Purseup, who was called in, said. This account greatly terrified Mrs. Glassington, whose intellects were not the clearest in the world, and who at any time suffered them to be obscured by her fears: she began to dread lest her niece should be brought into trouble, though she did not know how or why, and she was mortified that so vulgar a man as Ferment seemed to be, should have come in contact with her; from fears she got to grumbling, and foretelling, and she concluded by fairly scolding Mabella for offering to assist any body she did not know. Mabella, however, was accustomed to her aunt's grumblings, and, in the present case, she felt that her intention was right, and she could not be sorry for having obeyed the natural impulse of her generous and humane little heart: but her spirits were weak, and she began to weep. For this Mrs. Glassington reproved her, and reproached her with being the occasion of shutting her up in a

sick chamber, instead of enjoying herself among the rest of the company: then Mrs. Glassington began to weep too, and Mabella, though really unwell, got up, and commenced her preparations for going down; a motion so highly approved by her aunt, that it restored her to good-humour, and the rest of the time till dinner was passed in dressing for it. Such being the case, we shall here conclude our chapter, and repose after our labours.

CHAP. V.

An old new Acquaintance.—Another.

THE misfortunes that had attended Miss Normanburn's first appearance below stairs had not given her spirits, or made her wish for a second; and she hurried herself, as well as her aunt, in order, if possible, to be in the drawing-room first, and not to have to walk through such a crowd of people. Mrs. Glassington had no objection to her plan, and they found themselves safely seated in the room a full half hour before the time appointed for dinner, and ten minutes before any body else entered. In this interval, Mabella's nerves became a little more composed, and she promised her aunt, that she would not stir from her seat, if she could help it, even if she saw half the company on fire. The

first person who entered was Mrs. Petman, and she was much struck with the beauty of Miss Normanburn, who blushed, as soon as she perceived a stranger.

Mrs. Petman was, as we have said, a good-natured woman, at least to those not connected with her, or dependent upon her, and she had particular reasons, at this time, for wishing to form respectable acquaintances among her own sex; she, therefore, very politely addressed Mrs. Glassington, and asked if she was not right in supposing that she had the pleasure of seeing a part of the ancient family of Normanburn. To this Mrs. Glassington made a suitable reply, introducing her niece, as the only young branch of that family, and, desiring, in her turn, to know, who the lady was, who had so readily divined her family?

"Why, my dear Madam," answered Mrs. Petman, "I ought in policy to conceal my name, as, I fear, the dear departed treasure who bore it," (here she

wiped her tearless eyes) "very unintentionally, has been your greatest enemy."

"How so, Madam?" asked the other with surprise, "I don't know that I have any enemy!"

"Ah! there you are mistaken, my dear Madam," answered the lady: "beauty and worth, like yours, and loveliness, like this drooping rose, must have many! My dear departed, however, did you more injury than any body;—but, as I said, quite unintentionally; for it was he your cruel grandmother employed to make that wicked will. A professional man, you know, Madam, must do what he is employed to do! and I have heard Mr. Petman assure me many times,—for, poor dear creature, he often thought of the old lady's cruelty,—that he said all man could say to make her alter her resolution."

While Mrs. Petman uttered this with affectation of great feeling, the countenances of her auditors underwent various changes, and that of Mrs. Glassington

seeming to threaten a reply not according with her wish to have some intimacy during her stay in the house with her, Mrs. Petman took her hand, and pressing it tenderly, as she well knew how, for she was a great dealer in *palmistry*, she said,

" I see you are too true a branch of that ancient and respectable family, Madam, to let any ungenerous resentment, for what was, indeed, done in the mere course of business, oppose the desire I have to be known to you; and besides, I can tell you, that my dear Petman was really forced into it, for he hated business, being of a good family, and coming into it only to please my father! and he would willingly have sent his partner, a person regularly bred, who understood all the little affairs better than he did, but Mrs. Normanburn's letter was imperative, and sent, too, by a special messenger, and the whole business was done in such a hurry, that he really had no time to consider."

"I think he could not be to blame!" said Mabella, "for, if my head was to be cut off, the man that made the axe would not be guilty of my death."

"Why, you lovely angel! I declare, I could kiss you for your noble sentiment! what was it about? an axe, and —no matter! I see you are as noble in mind, as in blood!" answered Mrs. Petman: and this flattery, which would have disgusted a sensible woman, and which even the inexperienced Mabella perceived to be gross, quite did away the painful feeling that had seized upon her aunt, and induced that foolish woman to say, that she thought, on this occasion, exactly as Miss Normanburn did. She then asked Mrs. Petman, how she had learnt who she was, as she had not yet put down either her own name, or her niece's in the book, though she meant, of course, to subscribe to the balls, and do as other people do: and Mrs. Petman told her, that her dear friend, Miss Chatterer, a

very genteel woman, of a good family, and who visited none but the first people, had informed her of her arrival and appearance, in the morning, and that talking the matter over with her dear Chatter, as she called her for shortness, they had agreed, that she must be of the Normanburn family, and not, as they had at first supposed, of some other Normanburn race.

Mrs. Glassington was by this time so gratified and mollified, that she forgave Mrs. Petman for having been the wife of the man, who made her grandmother's will, and, as she knew nothing of the character, or adventures of the wanton widow, and her address was certainly that of a gentlewoman, she immediately began an intimacy with her, and inwardly congratulated both herself, and Mabella, on so fortunate a rencontre. Mrs. Petman was still more pleased to have got females who knew not her history, to keep her among reputable society, and,

having bestowed a warm eulogium on Miss Chatterer, senior, she was proceeding to tell Mabella how happy she would be in the acquaintance of those angelic girls, her nieces, who were, in fact, the only people in the place, at all fit to associate with, when the jolly trio, followed by Captain Croker, entered the room.

Mrs. Petman, who affected a great deal of youthful activity, ran to meet them, jerking, and shaking her *behind*, in a most surprising manner, and, having arrested the three ladies in the middle of the room, where she detained them full five minutes, she at last ran back again, and begged to introduce her dear Miss Chatterer, and her lovely nieces, to her valued friends, Mrs. Glassington, and Miss Normanburn. The civilities usual on such occasions were performed, each lady making a formal curtsey, and Miss Rebecca, and Miss Charlotte Chatterer, elbowing each other as they reared up, after exhibiting their part of the ceremony.

Poor Mabella felt that she did not at all curtsey in the style of these young ladies, and, though her natural manner, aided by her timidity, was a thousand times more graceful, she fancied, like too many other modest people without experience, that she was much inferior in carriage, and address, to her new acquaintances. In the morning they had been rude, but they now looked quite gracious, and she felt a natural pleasure in having met with young companions of her own sex, whom her aunt would think proper acquaintances for her.

Captain Croker stood by during this introduction, and then, addressing Miss Chatterer, he said, " And now, Madam, you must do me the favour to make me known to these ladies, who have condescended to allow me to offer my services to them, without knowing my name."

" With all my heart, Croky," answered the lady, with a horse-laugh! " but

you're an intolerable flirt, and an engaged man, so I won't take any body in, by passing you off for a prize with, a landed estate, and a house that wants a head, ha! ha! ha! This is Captain Croker, Mrs. Glassington."

At the name of Croker, Mrs. Glassington coloured scarlet, aud repeated it, with some surprise. The Captain coloured too, and looked a little vexed, especially when Mabella said:

"Why, surely I have heard that name before!"

"Oh! child! it's a musical name, you know! you've heard of Ally Croker!" answered Jack Chatterer, and laughed again most tremendously.

"Miss Normanburn has heard it frequently, I dare say," answered the Captain, "for my father was many years the sole agent of old Mr. and Mrs. Normanburn."

"Well, Croker, that is surprisingly odd, and delicious!" cried Mrs. Petman, interrupting Mrs. Glassington, who was

about to say something, "very odd, indeed! here the Normanburns find in this house the son of one man, and the widow of another, who were the very agents that helped to wrong them." At this Captain Croker took fire, declaring, that from such of his father's papers, as he had perused, he was convinced that he had done all he could to prevail on Mrs. Normanburn, to do justice to her daughter, and that, if he was not so convinced, he would have left the house, rather than have intruded on Mrs. Giassington. He was proceeding in rather a high tone, to the great distress of Mabella, and the amusement of the rest of the party, when several strangers entered, and he instantly stopped. Mrs. Petman then asked, what was become of that warm-looking young brewer who had fought in the morning; and Captain Croker, in a low voice, recounted as much of the adventures of the morning, as decency would permit. He said he understood

that both doctor and patient kept close in bed, but he supposed the rest of the family would grace the dinner table. He had hardly spoken, when Mr. Ferment and his wife and daughter came in, and, as the dinner bell rang immediately, we shall go to table in a new chapter.

CHAP. VI.

A Dinner.—Gentle and Simple.—Drain revived. —The various Effects of Fear.

As it is the custom of Harrogate for the visitors to take their seats at dinner in the order of their arrival, our two travellers found themselves separated from their new acquaintance, and at the bottom of the table, there being only a lady and gentleman who had arrived during the engagement of the morning, below them. Immediately opposite them sat Mr. Barnacle, and the rest of their neighbours were of that harmless, and uninteresting set of people, who are born to eat, sleep, and die; and who, when they visit public places, where they necessarily pay for their dinner, think it incumbent on them to eat as much as they can possibly contrive to deposit, with the very

closest packing in their accommodating stomachs, generally three times as much as an ordinary dinner would consist of, or an ordinary stomach admit of. And very cruel in its operation would such conduct be, not towards themselves, but towards the providers of dinners in general, if they were paid according to the rate of what is usually considered *a* plentiful dinner, and had conscientiously charged no more than one such dinner would come to, with due allowance for trouble, &c. and a fair profit! nay, it would be complete ruin to them; but these sagacious gentlemen, who seem more than any other class to profit by the experience of others, invariably provide against the possibility of loss, even if the guest would eat six times as much as he ought, and the eater, knowing this, has no qualms of conscience to embitter the substantial pleasures he is rioting in; he expatiates in boundless luxury over the delicious variety, for which he knows he

must pay so dearly, and not unfrequently finishes his career of life somewhat earlier, for having taken such good care not to be a loser.

It was to this saving, or eating spirit, which animated their neighbours, that our two ladies were indebted for peace and quietness during dinner; and, though there was much noise of tongues, of jaws, of teeth, of lips, of knives, forks, and spoons, yet no part of the conversation beyond a civil invitation to take something, or a request to be helped to something, was addressed to them, and Mabella began to think that dining in public was not so formidable a thing, as she had imagined.

When the heat of the engagement, however, was somewhat abated, and the good people had a little leisure to look about them, they did not fail to recognize Miss Normanburn, and she had the mortification to hear them repeating the adventures of the morning to each other,

and laughing pretty audibly. At last, an old Quaker, who had a large portion of the flesh, whatever he might have of the spirit, called out to her from the place where he sat, and said;

"Damsel! what hast thee done with young friend Ferment? truly, he meriteth thy compassion, for they say he hath shed his blood in thy service." Poor Mabella could not doubt of this being addressed to her, for, besides that the speaker stared full upon her, she saw the eyes of every other person near doing the same, and almost sinking with confusion and vexation, she shrunk behind her aunt, as if to hide herself. It certainly was not her intention to reply, but, if it had, she would have been prevented by Mrs. Ferment, who said, that she thought, after the vile abuse her son had suffered, it was rather too bad to hear him spoken of in that way, and that the next time he put himself forward to serve any poor empty pursed Misses, she hoped

he would have as bad for his pains. Then, observing that the Miss Chatterers were tossing their heads, and very unceremoniously laughing in her face, mixing no small degree of scorn with their mirth, she turned to them, and said, "Aye, my young ladies, you may laugh if you will, but them that has the purses full may laugh too! At these places, where all pay alike, all should be equal, and no part has a right to insult all the rest, as some folks, that shall be nameless, seem to take a delight in doing. A little more good manners would shew better breeding, methinks!"

"Woman!" shouted forth the elder Chatterer, "how dare you take the liberty to speak thus to people of our family? it's monstrous!"

"Well, *Woman*, and what's your family to me?" answered Mrs. Ferment. "My husband here pays his way, and could have credit for ten thousand to-morrow, and my girls need not go a beg-

ging to no man. We scorn to lie! you'll observe that, if you please, and we can feel as much when our flesh is hurt, as any of you. You'll be pleased not to *woman* me!"

When Mrs. Ferment began this last sentence, Mrs. Chatterer took into her mouth the larger half of a glass of port wine, which, when she had rinced her teeth with it, she intended to swallow, but the wrath she suffered so affected her throat, that her efforts to swallow were vain, and the wine, not liking its'situation, took the easiest direction it could find, and spouted out of her nose, her mouth being firmly closed.

In this situation Miss Chatterer, senior, was no bad representative of Bacchus spouting wine, as from a fountain; and, if any fastidious reader should object to her sex, or captiously assert, that a woman could not possibly represent the jolly God, we beg leave to assure him, that he never was more mistaken in his

life: for not only had she the enormous, fat broad cheeks, of a fiery red, the large staring eyes, and an enormous double chin, but the latter was graced with a beard, which looked formidable enough.

As soon as Miss Chatterer's nostrils began to play, and spout forth the rosy stream, the ladies, as if with one accord, started from the table, and uttered a shrill scream, that penetrated to the farthest corner of the house; and the two nieces, who sat as usual one on each side of their aunt, both at once placed their hands on the back of her chair, and she fell, like a huge overbalanced haystack. A waiter was passing at the moment with a half-full soup tureen, and, pressed in by the scrambling fair, he could not save the vessel from falling, too; for Miss Chatterer's head hit his stomach, and, as he gave way before it, he let the tureen fall on her face: her mouth was open, and the soup, or a part of it, following the course of nature, hastened to flow down

her throat. And now, as her throat by no means welcomed it, the screams were redoubled, and twenty voices at once called out for Doctor Drain! a call that illustrious and humane individual was not slow to obey, spite of his experience in the morning; so true is it that real philanthropy is above all selfish considerations, or fears! in fact, the good man was already in the room, as well as his former patient, for the musical voices of the ladies had penetrated to those recesses, where they had been respectively deposited; and, in spite of the suggestions of prudence, and decency, sent them into the dining room, so recently cleansed from the consequences of their former exploits, with little more on than their breeches and dressing gowns, to which Drain had, in addition, three or four long, or square black patches on his nose, and an old greasy, red woollen night cap, fastened on his head with a coloured cotton handkerchief, that was tied under his chin.

With his lancet, as usual, in his hand (it has been said, but we do not venture to assert it, that he never went to sleep without holding a lancet, in order to be ready for what might happen) he reached the spot where Miss Chatterer lay with her head much lower than her heels; for the press of the ladies about, and her own enormous weight had rendered it too Herculean a task to raise her, or get the chair from under her, and she was by this time, so black in the face, that the little man had some reason to think, indeed he always did think so, that bleeding was necessary; and he proceeded with wonderful celerity to begin. The landlord and landlady in the mean time were expending much breath, and sundry pieces of eloquence to persuade the ladies to give way a little, and let the gentlemen raise the sick woman; but the ladies paid as little attention as if these exhortations had been expressed in Chinese, or any other outlandish tongue; nay, we cannot

be certain that they might not have been more attentively listened to, if the audience could not have understood a single word of them, for the fair sex have a wondrous love of what it is impossible to comprehend; be this as it may, however, they were totally disregarded in this instance, and the poor woman would have probably died from suffocation, had not the same clothier, who in the morning pinioned Mr. Tom Ferment, now offered his services to raise Mrs. Chatterer. He was assisted by a waiter and the landlord, and after one or two unsuccessful efforts, they at last lifted her from the ground: the chair, however, was broken in the struggle.

And now the happy Drain drew blood from her arm, using the tureen, which was but little damaged to catch it; and while one of the junior Chatterers fainted, the other went into an hysteric, and many ladies turned sick; Mrs. Petman in her fright threw herself into the arms of a

stout young tobacconist. While all this passed, the insatiable Drain was calculating whether the vessel would hold all he intended to take.

CHAP. VII.

" Great was the fall thereof."—Conversation.

PERHAPS, there was no one present, who so thoroughly enjoyed this scene as Mr. Tom Ferment. He and his family had received innumerable insults from the Chatterers, and he felt that this, so nearly resembling his own disastrous adventure, amply repaid him for all. He mounted the table in order to have a better view of the action, and of the confusion among the women, and from that eminence he encouraged the Doctor by sundry phrases and clapping of hands, a species of wit, in which he was joined by some others, and on which he seemed to pique himself highly. The quaker and several men thought his situation so enviable, that, regardless of the tablecloth, they, too, mounted, and the room presented a most

singular spectacle. On one side between the table and the wall, and that not the most spacious part, sat Mrs. Chatterer without cap or wig, supported by two men, while Drain, who looked like a conjuror or necromancer, watched her spouting blood, which sprinkled his face and his once white dressing gown. Around this group, as near as they could possibly get, were all the females in the house, (except, indeed, our heroine and her aunt, who, under the care of Barnacle, had made their retreat at the very first alarm) some of them crying, some laughing, some scolding; some praying, some pushing and struggling, some fainting, some almost vomiting, and all acting as if their senses had taken leave of them. Among these was Captain Croker, with a few other gentlemen, endeavouring to pacify or persuade them to be rational, and on the table stood the rest of the male community, with Tom Ferment in his robes and night cap, like an Asiatic so-

vereign, hallowing and laughing, and stamping, and using other violent gesticulations.

During some minutes, things remained thus; but, at last, Miss Chatterer, who had now recovered her recollection, began to feel some awkward movements in the interior, where she had, to use a sea phrase, *stowed* provision enough to serve two poor families; of this she gave notice by a tremendous eructation, that made even Drain start, and he afterwards declared, that it sounded to his ears, like the report of a pistol.

A man less earnestly bent on a favourite pursuit, would have taken warning by this, and put on the bandage, but enthusiasm is seldom, if ever, in league with discretion, and he bled on, regardless of the hint.* Another and another succeeded, and matters were coming to a fearful crisis, so fearful that she begged in a voice of horror to be led to her own room; when suddenly that part of the

tables on which Tom Ferment and his friends stood, and which was but a leaf put in, gave way, and the whole party fell with a tremendous crash. The uproar was now greater than ever, for knives, forks, spoons and plates, were thus thrown down! The doctor, the patient, the basin, and the blood, with the two male supporters were buried beneath Tom Ferment, and the quaker, whose nose came with such force against that of Miss Charlotte Chatterer, that they both sent forth streams of blood; Mrs. Petman had her head struck by that of the young tobacconist, who had resigned his burden, and mounted the table, and who now lay insensible by her side; the landlord received a black eye from the retreating elbow of Mrs. Ferment, who was knocked down by one of the falling males, some say her husband; and Tom Ferment himself lost a tooth against the steel busk Miss Chatterer wore in her stays.

And now a din, and a discord, more tremendous than any that had yet occurred, began, and the landlord, seizing Tom Ferment by the throat, vowed that he was the cause of all this squabble, which would be the ruin of his house, and that he would sue him for damages. Tom, as soon as he could rise from the body of Miss Chatterer, returned his compliments with hearty good will, both in words and actions, likewise vowing, that he would sue for his tooth; Miss Charlotte Chatterer fixed her nails in the bloody face of the quaker, who, spite of his peaceable professions, could not help giving her two or three hearty slaps on the bottom, accompanied with as many curses, as he knelt with one knee on the stomach of Drain, and the other on her sister's back, and each man, as if resolved to fight, singled out some foe.

This manifestation of valour on the part of the males, seemed to restore the females to their senses, especially, when

they saw one huge fellow snatch up a knife, and they wisely began to retreat, so that very soon the Chatterers and the landlady were the only women that remained. The men having withdrawn to another part of the room, where their contentions were far from subsiding, the landlady had an opportunity of approaching to examine whether Miss Chatterer, as she feared, had bled to death, an accident, considering all things, not utterly impossible.

And here we cannot but take the occasion to admire, as the landlady did, the wonderful sagacity of Drain, who, though overwhelmed, and pounded almost to a paste, and steeped in the fluid he loved so well, had placed his thumb firmly on the orifice in the patient's arm, and kept it there. He now arose once more from the field of battle, and sought the vessel to contain what he designed further to take, groaning the whole time with pain; but Mrs. Chatterer was so faint, and so

much hurt, that the landlady would have the arm tied up, and Drain was not in a condition to contend with her; he put on the bandage, and leaving the lady to the care of others, retired once more to his chamber.

While all this passed within doors, Mrs. Glassington and her companions were tempted by a very beautiful evening to take a walk, and they all seemed equally glad to escape from the tremendous noise that filled the house. Indeed, Mr. Barnacle said, that, if these disagreeable scenes continued, he should shorten, even the short time he had to stay, and return home; to which Mrs. Glassington replied, that, except two or three people, the company seemed not at all select, and she thought, whenever her friends went from the house, she should try another house. Mr. Barnacle, after hearing this, was silent a few minutes, and then said,

"At these places, Madam, which are

a sort of little world, or microcosm, it would be folly to expect a select, or unmixt society; all who can afford to pay the price, may come, and, provided that nobody disturbs the public peace, or insults his neighbour, I think one cannot reasonably object to him, because he does not bring his genealogical tree in his hand, free from blot, since the days of Adam."

"Oh! no—no, certainly!" said Mrs. Glassington: "but it would be much better if there was not such a mixture, I think, Mr. Barnacle."

"It would be better if the mixture was free from all poisonous ingredients, Madam," answered the old gentleman; "it is a pity that all whose conduct has been glaringly indiscreet, are not excluded from societies, where so many innocent young women come! but it is happy for them that they have discreet aunts to guard them against improper intimacies."

This was uttered in so pointed a manner, that it struck Mabella, even more than her aunt, and she longed to ask, if Mr. Barnacle meant to allude to any particular person; but modesty, and the fear of committing an impropriety, withheld her, and Mrs. Glassington, instead of shewing any curiosity on the subject, asked Mr. Barnacle, if he was acquainted with Mr. Croker: not much, he said; he had occasionally met him at public places, and in public meetings.

"I ask merely for curiosity, Sir," said the lady: "his father was long the agent, if not the director of my grandfather and grandmother, Normanburn; you most likely know our story, Mr. Barnacle. I believe all the country does, and if so, you will think it natural enough, that we should wish to know, what sort of a character this person has! I must say, his intruding on me has not pleased me!"

There was something either in Mrs. Glassington's manner of saying this, or in

the matter itself, that did not seem to please Mr. Barnacle, and he shrugged his shoulders still higher than their usual position; but he made no reply. "I think, aunt, he was very polite to you this morning," said Mabella, "and I know you thought so yourself, and, I'm sure, we had better not think about what was done so long ago! you know, if you are angry with Captain Croker, you ought in justice to be angry too with Mrs. Petman, though she could no more help what her husband did, than this gentleman can what his father did, or we can what great-grandmamma did." "Well, Miss Normanburn, I know all that!" answered the aunt, "and there is nobody bears malice less than I do. Mrs. Petman is a different thing, Bell: but it is a sort of degradation to be intimate with those Crokers! I always hated and despised the family, though I knew nothing about any of them but the old one, and, I am sure, Mr. Barnacle here, who is a man

of family himself, and said something so proper about young people and intimacies, would think it very strange, if *we*, he knows our family, should be intimate with these second rate people, those stewards, and agents. When I first saw the Captain, I thought he was a gentleman, and I did not object to receiving his attentions; but this discovery is quite a new thing, you know."

"Well, aunt, you know best," said Mabella, "but I wish, for my part, that all enmities were done away!" "Yes!" said Mrs. Glassington sharply, "I know your wishes, my dear, and I know your private reason, too!"

This imprudent and indelicate expression, uttered, as all was that Mrs. Glassington uttered, without thought, or reflection, covered Mabella's face with blushes, and filled Barnacle with surprise; it certainly conveyed the idea of Miss Normanburn having a preference for Captain Croker, and so he understood it;

but, at the same time, as neither lady seemed to have known the gentleman before that morning, he could not help wondering at the expedition Cupid had made in bringing so beautiful a girl under subjection to him, at the confidence the fair Mabella had reposed, as it would seem, in her aunt, and at the bad use the aunt made of it! and when Mrs. Glassington, at the conclusion of the last phrase she uttered, asked him if he was acquainted with the Lightfoots, he was convinced that it was only to turn his attention from what she had previously said. He merely answered, "no, Madam:" and Mabella, who began to feel the effects of her various harassings, and was not without reason apprehensive that her aunt might mention her having seen young Lightfoot in the wood, even if she said no more, instantly begged to return home, saying that she was a good deal fatigued, and should be glad to have her tea. The party then turned their faces

homeward, and Mrs. Glassington said, she hoped Mr. Barnacle would take his tea with them, an offer which he accepted, with the friendly intention of putting Mabella on her guard, if he had an opportunity, against Mrs. Petman: as to the aunt, he plainly perceived that she told all she knew, and, being unwilling to have a friendly hint hacknied about from one to another, till it reached Mrs. Petman, or perhaps even told to herself, with whom he had no desire either to be intimate or to quarrel, he resolved not to throw away his information on her. He walked by her side in silence, while she entertained him with the whole account of how the family of the Normanburns had existed since their mother's death, what was their income, and the peculiar humour of each individual; from thence she descended to her own domestic management, made a short panegyric on Mabella's culinary skill, and her excellence at her needle, and concluded the

whole with a bitter lamentation on her want of accomplishments, which might, she said, have supplied the place of fortune. To all this Mr. Barnacle made no other reply, but a sort of groan, and he drew down the corners of his mouth, and opened his eyes uncommonly wide, while he looked at Mabella's lovely face, and conscious countenance.

CHAP. VIII.

How wise Men may be deceived, with other Matters.—Mrs. Glassington's Discretion.

DURING the time of Mrs. Glassington's expedition, Mr. and Mrs. Drawmore had so effectually exerted themselves, that the house had assumed once more a peaceable aspect, and, in consequence of the absence of several individuals, among whom were the Chatterers and Mrs. Petman, the room was tolerably quiet. Tea was ordered, and while Mabella was making it, Mr. Barnacle asked her, how she liked such and such a new publication, mentioning, among others, several very fashionable novels.

"I really have not read any of the books you mention, Sir," answered she with great simplicity, "but I believe I know Robinson Crusoe from the beginning to the end."

As she uttered this, Captain Croker came up to her, and, suppressing a smile, which had appeared when he heard what she said, he bowed to Mrs. Glassington, and then sat down in a chair that stood near. Notwithstanding all his care, Mabella had seen the smile, and understood it, and, fearful that she had said something foolish or improper, she blushed, and turning to Barnacle, said, "Is Robinson Crusoe a wrong book for girls to read?" "Not in my opinion," said Barnacle; "it is a very interesting and instructive book, and always pleases me much. But why did you think it was, Miss Normanburn?"

Mabella did not choose to say that Captain Croker had looked as if *he* thought it was, and she answered, that she did not think it was, but she wished to know the opinion of others. Now, Mr. Barnacle was not blind, and he had seen, as well as heard, all that passed: it confirmed him in his suspicion that Mabella thought favourably of the Captain, and he could not but won-

der at the caprice of women. The Captain was neither young, handsome, nor well-made; he was not even what women in general consider agreeable in his manners; he had lived chiefly on his own estate, and thought that not only no country, but no county in this country could produce any thing half so delightful; consequently, he was somewhat provincial, and on this he piqued himself: he was not what is called a gallant man; on the contrary, many ladies thought him rude, and inattentive, and he was usually known by the name of Bachelor Croker, among the females of his circle. If we add to this, that the Captain, till he was made an officer in the Yeomanry, had divided his time between hunting, shooting, a turning-lathe, his farming concerns, and a newspaper, the reader will not wonder at Mr. Barnacle's surprise, on the discovery he had made.

And now, the old gentleman, who sometimes indulged in pretty extensive

speculations on the concerns of his neighbours, began to debate, in his own mind, the probability of Mr. Croker doing so foolish a thing, as to marry a very young wife, with good blood in her veins, (a circumstance that always requires good equipages, &c.) and no fortune; and, though a man will sometimes suffer a mere fancy to induce him to act even against the ruling passion, yet Mr. Barnacle imagined that it would hardly be the case here. The Captain's character for parsimony was pretty generally known, and it was said, that he had broken off an engagement some years before with a young lady, whose father could not give her quite so much fortnne as he had said he would when the affair commenced. All this occurred to Mr. Barnacle, and he looked so oddly earnest, while it passed through his head, that even Mrs. Glassington observed it.

"How comical you look, Mr. Barnacle," said she, "I should like to know

what it is that amuses you so much! pray, tell me, for I love to know all every body thinks."

"Curiosity, Madam, is laudable," returned Barnacle; "as Johnson observes, it is the first spring of knowledge, and I, myself, particularly like to see the ladies exercise this spring, and keep it going! to make it useful, however, another quality is requisite: I mean memory! for of what use can it be to know much, if it merely passes through the brain, and leaves no trace behind? You should not then seek to know all others think, till you are sure you can retain it."

"Why, as to that," said Croker, "the best way to retain, and fix any thing in one's own head, is to tell it again to others; and I really do believe, myself, that the reason the ladies always remember their neighbours' faults so well, is, because they repeat them so often over to all their acquaintance."

"Aye, very likely," said Mrs. Glas-

sington, "and a very good way too! I can say with truth that I never forget any thing! I wish I could make my niece remember as well."

"When she has practised the same laudable plan as long," returned Barnacle, "she may probably be as perfect." This Mrs. Glassington took for a compliment, and she blushed, and bowed, saying, "Thank you, Sir! I'm glad to see that gallantry is not quite out of fashion!" To this, Barnacle, in his turn, bowed, and a conversation of satirical compliments and observations on his side, and lively answers on Mrs. Glassington's, began, to the mortification of Mabella, who saw her aunt was laughed at, and the amusement of Croker, who sat silent. With the hope of changing the conversation, Mabella asked him how the bustle ended after she left the dining room, and whether the Miss Chatterer's would be in soon.

"Why, Ma'am, the bustle ended, not

in the same way, but rather more disastrously than it did in the morning, I believe," said the Captain; "for, in consequence of the breaking down of the table with six or eight men upon it, there was some serious injury sustained by various persons. Your persecutor, the young brewer, has lost a tooth; his father has a fit of the gout coming on; Mrs. Petman has a contusion on one eye, and down the side of the face, by collision with a young tobacconist; and as to Miss Chatterer, senior, they say she will not leave her bed this fortnight! The poor woman, as well as her nieces, is black and blue; and Miss Charlotte's nose will hardly be its natural size again before Midsummer."

"Lord bless me!" cried Mrs. Glassington, starting up, "is this all true, Sir? Why, if I'd known it, I should have gone to the ladies before I sat down to tea! poor things! I really pity poor Mrs. Petman exceedingly, she has nobody to comfort her!"

"Why, I don't know that," said Croker, "I hear she has."

"Indeed, I'm glad of it," returned the lady, "and if you'll excuse me, Mr. Barnacle, I'll just run up, and see how they all are, while Miss Normanburn pours out the tea:" then, without waiting for an answer, she flew out of the room.

Nothing could well be more indiscreet, or improper, than to leave a girl of Mabella's age in a public room, with no other companions, but two gentlemen, both strangers to her; and though Mrs. Glassington was so thoughtless, as to be perfectly unconscious of this, all those she left behind were quite aware of it. The two men looked at each other, with some surprise in their countenances, and Mabella almost jumped up to follow her aunt: to have crossed the room alone, however, would have been more formidable than remaining; and she employed herself in pouring out the tea, and, prompted by her natural politeness, she offered a cup to

Mr. Croker. He took it, and began a sort of lamentation on the state of the house, and the singular disturbance that had prevailed throughout the day, declaring, that, as often as he had visited Harrogate, he had never met with any thing like it. In this, and other similar matter, he was uninterrupted by either of his companions, and he had hardly finished, when Mrs. Glassington returned. She gave a doleful account of the state in which she found her friends, particularly Miss Chatterer, who was so ill, that she thought it would be necessary to call in Doctor Drain again; he might order her something to compose her nerves.

"Well, I wonder at her wanting to see him!" said Croker, "he has drained her once, and, if he is allowed to proceed, she'll be as dry as my far close, that has cost me more than I like to remember."

"Your wonder may cease, Sir," answered Barnacle, "for Mr. Drain is an

universal favourite with the ladies, and has much practice among them in his own neighbourhood. He never fails to convince them of the efficacy of bleeding, and I know several, who, in consequence of employing him, are quite altered women. Why, my wife, Mrs. Barnacle, about two years ago, was stout and florid, and as fine a woman of her age as can be met with; unfortunately, she took cold, or something a little disordered her, and our own medical man being out, when sent to, she employed Drain. He went to work, as usual, and in a week she was so reduced that she could not stand, nay, she has never been well since, and she looks ten years older than she did. I remonstrated, and complained that if she went on, she would lay me under the necessity of seeking another partner; for I could not live single, young lady! but I believe nothing would have done, if I had not got every body that came to see her

to tell her how much older she looked, and how her complexion was changed for the worse."

Here Mr. Croker laughed, and said, that if any thing would frighten the ladies, that would.

"Yes, indeed, Sir," said Mrs. Glassington, "and with very great reason! for what can be a greater misfortune to a woman than to look old, and change for the worse? and, however you may laugh at it, Captain Croker, you see Mr. Barnacle had a different opinion! He knew of what importance good looks and a complexion are to us, who have nothing else to recommend us! Who cares for a wizened old woman, I wonder? Why, there's that good Mrs. Petman, there! I declare, it grieved my heart to see the poor woman! with a black eye and a cheek! Mercy! Mr. Barnacle, how can you smile, you cruel man you? Such a nice, clear skin, as she has! though, to be sure, it is rather darkish. I was sorry I

disturbed her, for how do you think the pious woman was employed? Why, she was at prayers with a young clergyman, who, it seems, came this evening, and who is an intimate friend!"

When Mrs. Glassington arrived at the word *friend*, Captain Croker set down his cup, and starting up, walked to the other end of the room, and Barnacle shook his head in a very significant manner. Mrs. Glassington looked as if she thought something not right was meant, but she hardly knew what to guess, and she asked whether Barnacle knew who the clergyman was. "I do not, Madam," answered he, "but I venture to suppose that it may be the Rev. William Bungler, who has been much concerned for the lady, and who, probably, may bring her some news of her last husband, Mr. O' Shauglanee." As he expected, this produced a torrent of questions and exclamations from Mrs. Glassington, to which he made no other reply, but that he imagined

every body had known the adventures of Mrs. O'Shauglanee, and her bad luck in the fields of matrimony.

"Lord bless me, no!" cried Mrs. Glassington: "how should I know any thing about it, Mr. Barnacle? What a sad thing for her to do ill the second time! well—there's no knowing men! but I wish you would tell me all you know about it!"

Barnacle answered, that all he knew was, that Mrs. Petman had unfortunately married a man who had another wife, and that Mr. O'Shauglanee was convicted of bigamy, and, consequently, Mrs. Petman really had no second husband. "But, Madam," continued he, "your friend Miss Chatterer can give you many interesting particulars, I dare say, and, perhaps, even the poor lady herself may be in a communicative humour. You seem to be a stranger to Mrs. Petman, and you had *better inquire*."

"Do you really think so? Well, so I

will! and if you'll make Bell there talk to you, Mr. Barnacle, till I come back, I'll go up now to the Chatterers, and hear all they have to say!" So saying, Mrs. Glassington wâs about to leave Mabella a second time, but, on her earnestly begging to go with her aunt, her request was complied with, and the two ladies together entered the room of Miss Chatterer.

CHAP. IX.

A true Friend.—Hints on Dress.

THE inquiries of Mrs. Glassington neither had, nor required much preface, and, weakened as she was, Miss Chatterer was delighted to have an opportunity of repeating for the five hundredth time her account of poor Mrs. Petman's misfortunes. We say *her account*, for it was almost solely her own, having as few facts in it as possible, and those so altered and misrepresented, that their very father would not have known them again. And here we must tell the reader of one peculiar trait in the recitals of Miss Chatterer, and that is, that they all deviated as far from the truth as possible, even when such deviation was really more to the injury than the benefit of those whom she intended to befriend; it was, therefore, a

most unlucky circumstance when they happened to have right on their side, and nothing could procure them more honour and fame from this public-spirited woman, than having forfeited both with the rest of the world. Mrs. Petman, with more judgment and sagacity, than could well have been expected from her, though, to be sure, very weak people are often very cunning, determined to have Miss Chatterer for a defender, and, not trusting solely to this taste or turn, or talent in that good lady, she secured her by a handsome present or bribe, not covered up under the shape of a piece of plate, or a ring, or a set of ornaments, but in the delicate form of a bank note, just as beautiful as when first issued from the great paper concern in the city. This bank note was the regulating key note of all Miss Chatterer's compositions on the subject, and though she never did, and vowed she never could tell any circumstance twice alike, she contrived always to prove,

that Mrs. Petman was the most amiable, discreet, generous woman alive, and that she had been cruelly used. To auditors so free from guile as those who now listened to her, she had no difficulty in the world to prove all this, and, unfortunately for Mrs. Glassington, Mr. Barnacle had quite miscalculated when he thought that she would hear Mrs. Petman's errors rather exaggerated than otherwise, from so known a slanderer as Miss Chatterer. Every sentence that lady uttered, interested the feelings of our two friends, and, from that day, Mrs. Glassington became the friend and champion of Mrs. Petman, and openly defended her when she heard more than one lady occasionally throw out a hint respecting Mrs. O'Shauglanee. During the time that the invalids were confined by their bruises to their chambers, Mrs. Glassington and Mabella devoted all the hours they could spare to them, and, before the half of their allotted period was

over, the two junior Miss Chatterers had vowed an eternal friendship for Mabella. They told her all their love affairs, and flirtations, and mentioned so many young men of fortune, who had made them offers, that Mabella began to wonder they had not selected some one to be their husband. When they had told, not all that had befallen themselves, but all they thought it prudent to divulge, they insisted upon knowing, how often Mabella had been in love; and when the blushing girl answered, that she never had a lover, they both called her a sly flirt, and said she was afraid to tell.

Mabella, though inexperienced, perceived that whatever she imparted to these young ladies, would be repeated again, for they had told her some anecdotes of their friends, which they asserted were confided to them; and, as the sort of fancy her romantic inclination had cherished for the stranger in the wood, could hardly be called love, indeed, she

was ashamed to think it any thing but gratitude, and as, at any rate, he could not be said to be her lover, she did not feel that she was telling an untruth, when she asserted, that she never had a lover, and refused very prudently to talk about herself at all. This did not satisfy them, and they applied to Mrs. Glassington, to know whether Mabella had never been in love; and that foolish woman, whose whole mind was now bent on a second husband, entered but too warmly on the subject with them, and was cruel enough to tell them, that she believed in her heart she really was in love with Angelo Lightfoot. Poor Mabella wept with vexation, which only confirmed her aunt's story, and the two young ladies teased her so maliciously, and so unmercifully, that this, added to the unfavourable opinion she had begun to form of their dispositions, served to alienate her from them; and they, on their side,

perceiving it, failed not to hate her unmercifully.

By the time that they returned to society, the company was completely changed, and many intelligent strangers of both sexes, had supplied the places of the Ferments, and others of the same stamp; but, though Mrs. Glassington made considerable advances to many, she was treated with a shyness that mortified her exceedingly: this only attached her the more to the Chatterers and Mrs. Petman, and, as the young ladies had always a number of beaux in attendance, during their promenades, she was pretty well amused.

Mabella did not improve so much in health as her aunt could have wished, and it was not till the beginning of the third week of her stay, that she thought her well enough to go to a ball. Many people, with such a girl under their care, would have hesitated before they exposed

her to so much heat and fatigue, as even the dressing for a first ball occasions, but Mrs. Glassington was out of patience with having lost so much time, and it was determined, that the party should all appear, and do their very best for admiration. Nobody was so happy in this determination as Mrs. Glassington; for, as to Mabella, the pleasure she had promised herself at Harrogate in a variety of society, had been so embittered, that she began to think the ball would prove very different from what she once expected; and, besides, the Miss Chatterers told her, that nobody could possibly dance there who had not had a master. She must then sit still, and to go to a ball and sit still, was more mortifying than to stay away. Nay, poor Mabella had another vexation! for Mrs. Petman, seeing that the gentlemen never failed to be where Miss Normanburn was, took a mighty fancy to leaning on her arm, when they were walking or stand-

ing, and to sit next her at other times; and Mabella had a most decided dislike to Mrs. Petman; her conversation was, at times, so very far from modest, that the poor girl was much ashamed for her, and, when she one day advised her to uncover her bosom more, as the Chatterers did, and recommended this as a lure to attract the men, Mabella expressed plainly her contempt and indignation. Her aunt, when told of it, only replied, that Mrs. Petman was right, she knew the world, and the sex, and, for her part, she thought, now every body went uncovered, it was not doing herself justice not to make the most of her person. "There is no harm in it, my dear, depend upon it!" said she; "and I desire that on Friday you will be like other people. You know, child, that you have a beautiful neck, and, as every body else will be as naked as they can, just to be decent, you may be quite easy about it. I wish I was as

plump as you are, thereabouts! but I shall do my best." And with this best of all resolutions to do her best, we shall, for the present, take leave of Mrs. Glassington, and put an end to our chapter.

CHAP. X.

Accomplishments.—Love teaches Humility.—The Triumph of Modesty.

We hope and trust that our readers, to whom, when discoursing of our heroine, we have chiefly spoken of her timidity and modesty, will not, therefore, set her down for a fool, or imagine that she had a large portion of apathetic stupidity, and an affectation of wisdom, ill suited to her years, for in so doing, our gentle reader would err most egregiously, she being, in fact, much more lively, and more easily moved to mirth, than her companions; indeed, if her quick sensibility and buoyant spirits had not been qualified by a very humble opinion of her own abilities, and a great fear of doing wrong,

she might, perhaps, have been by some people thought a giddy-brained goose, and by others a pert Miss.

From the time that Mrs. Glassington came to reside at Purlbeck, Mabella had never passed a single week without hearing, more than once, some pathetic regrets, that by the misfortunes of the family she was condemned to remain in a state of barbarism, perfectly uneducated, and that, if ever she did mix with the world, she would find herself so awkward, so unpolished, and so inferior to other young ladies in her own rank of life, that, in all human probability, instead of being admired, and making a good match, as she might have done, she would be called the pretty savage, and pass all the fag end of her days at Purlbeck, mending stockings, and making gruel. Mabella, who did not then feel the want of accomplishments, sometimes was rude enough to laugh at her

aunt's fears, and sometimes pert enough to say, that she did not care for accomplishments; but, by degrees, the repetition made much impression on her, and she fancied, that those who passed their time in learning to play, to sing, to dance, and to draw, must be a great deal happier than she was. She really was very happy herself—then it naturally followed that they must be more happy! and yet she could not exactly tell how that could be. Poor child! she little knew how much preferable her own situation was, to that of a young lady, who is to be all accomplished! she little knew the weariness, and consequent pettishness, produced by applying throughout the day, from seven in the morning till nine in the evening, with no other relaxation but a formal uninteresting walk in the square, which must be begun and ended to a minute, and the time occupied in eating! she little knew the mortification

arising from constant urging to fresh exertions, and invidious comparisons between herself and Miss ———, or Lady Mary ———! she knew not, for she had never suffered it; the torment of learning music without any ear, or taste for it, and the grief of finding (after eleven years of practice, at the rate of three or five hours a day) that a hurdy gurdy in the street is worth fifty such performances, as she could make.

None of these woes, nor any of the thousand others originating from the anti natural state, in which girls are now generally kept, did our poor heroine know! She had, on the contrary, experienced little else than pleasure in learning to read and to write, and the few books she had were so often read over, that there was hardly an incident, an observation, or a witty saying in them, that was not indelibly engraven on her memory. She had a knack, too, of applying what she learnt to the passing scene,

and here her friend Æsop was of the greatest use to her; she often quoted him, and though she had seen but little of mankind, she might be said to know them pretty well. In short, Mabella, though she knew no language but her own, never studied more music than her uncle could teach her, namely, to sing Tweed Side, the Yellow hair'd Laddie, and Gramachree Molly, which, unskilled as she was, she did with a pathos that brought tears into the good man's eyes! though she could draw nothing but patterns for muslin work, by putting her paper up to the window, nor dance either waltz, cotillon, or quadrille, though Mabella could do none of these, nor the hundred other things all young ladies now do, she was not ignorant; but had a better stock of real practical knowledge, than many of those who can perform all we have mentioned.

This stock, however, only made her thirst for more, and some time before her adventure in the wood, she had begun

to wish to understand many allusions in her books, which allusions her uncle explained but unsatisfactorily, and her aunt not at all; and pride, which grows with our growth, was sometimes mortified, that the heiress of Normanburn should not be able to learn such a thing as *that*.

This feeling increased wonderfully after the wood scene, and poor Mabella was humbled in the dust, when she thought, as she did many times every day, that if ever she met the stranger again, even supposing he might fancy her pretty, and like to look at her, which, as her aunt told her she was pretty, might be the case, yet he would despise her for her ignorance, and naturally prefer the society of any well-educated young lady. To be sure, if she were as beautiful as Juliet, the case would be different! but then Juliet was not only beautiful, but she was genteel, and well-bred, and shewed by her manner of speaking, that she had

been educated, so that, it seemed, beauty was not the only charm that captivated Romeo. Love, then, taught Mabella humility, and so severe were his lessons that it cost her many a tear.

Since she came to Harrogate, however, she had been a little surprised, more than once, to find, that, little as she knew, the Miss Chatterers knew less! and this to her was a great puzzle, because both their aunt and Mrs. Petman, and Mrs. Glassington, had said many times that they had had an excellent education, and were very accomplished. Then sometimes they wilfully did what they knew to be wrong, told a falsehood to others, and boasted of their cleverness, when alone with Mabella.

Mabella liked a little innocent mischief, and could carry on a joke with a grave face, but she detested lying, for which detestation she probably was indebted to never having been subjected to undue restraint, and to the story of Harry

and Tommy, in her old spelling book. She had a sincere love for all her friends, and, though she began to perceive that her aunt, like the peacock, was a little proud of fine feathers, and certainly did not at all times act exactly as Mabella had learnt to think, wisely, yet her respect for her was not diminished, and she thought that, perhaps, if her aunt had had more masters when she was young, she might have done better. But the Miss Chatterers openly declared that they did not care for *their* aunt! they told Mabella, without any injunction to secresy, that the *old mountain* (so they called her) loved her drop of dram, when she could get it snugly, and that she once was brought home quite tipsy from a supper party. To this they added reflections on her, that quite shocked Mabella; and, as she turned from them in disgust, she could not help proudly saying to herself, "I would have died, rather than have told any thing about my aunt."

From these and similar accidents Mabella had, now and then, a gleam of conscious worth, that enlightened her night of humility; but with regard to dressing for a public ball and comporting herself there, so as not to infringe on the usual forms and etiquette, she gave up the point, and, though she had a repugnance, more than she could express, to leave her bosom uncovered, her aunt's commands, and the example of young ladies accustomed to be much in public, and who assured her that if she covered up every body would say she *stuffed*, prevailed; and her kind aunt herself having arranged, and cut down, and pinned her dress, she remained, perhaps, as complete a model for one of the Graces, as could well be imagined. Mrs. Glassington was in raptures with her, and declared, she never saw any thing so animated as her face, or so lovely as her person, and Mrs. Petman vowed, that if she was a man, no power on earth would keep her lips off her.

"Then," said Mabella, colouring a deep crimson, "I should strike you such a blow, as would lay you senseless at my feet!"

"Bravo! my sweet innocent!" cried Mrs. Petman, laughing, "you really quite spout! but you'll know better by-and-bye."

"Indeed," said Mrs. Glassington, "I can't blame Bell for saying so, though, for, if any man took such a liberty with me, I would do the same. It's one thing to dress so for fashion, and to attract the men, and another to permit freedoms!"

Mrs. Petman was about to reply to this, when the two young Chatterers entered, as nearly naked as the usages of society would permit. They were very broad-chested, and remarkably plump young women, and, from the transparency of the little covering they had been compelled to assume, they exhibited beauties of so large a diameter, that one might have been tempted to inquire, where the

baby was? Mabella had before seen them, as she thought, indelicately dressed, but nothing like this, and it so disgusted her, and even Mrs. Glassington, (who excused them by saying it was their misfortune to be so large) that she was permitted to do as she liked about her own dress, and, armed with this permission, she unpinned the corners of her waist, and drew up the frock, till she felt quite comfortable, and very sure, that let the gentlemen look as hard as they would, they could not possibly get a peep at her bosom. Her aunt was not, at the bottom, sorry to see her more covered, for she recollected, that having worn a high gown all the morning, she might take cold, and, in that case, she must nurse her; so she lent her a silk handkerchief to throw on if she felt cold, and the whole party being assembled, and ready for action, they adjourned to the drawing-room to collect the beaux, and then entered the ball-room.

CHAP. XI.

A first Ball.—Modern Modesty, with a Variety of Matter.—Captain Gander.

WHOEVER has been at Harrogate knows very well that there is a great mixture of company at the balls, and that they are, in general, well attended. Harrogate was now pretty full, and when our party entered the room, preceded by Miss Chatterer, who herself filled the door-way, and left no room for any attendant gallant, the company was tolerably numerous.

Fearful of having Mrs. Petman, as usual, to support, Mabella seized her aunt's arm, and though the Miss Chatterers, who with their beaux walked after her, attracted every eye in the room, she fancied that all the people were looking at her. She pulled her aunt down in the

first vacant seat, and trembling, still held her arm, and begged that she would not leave her: even Mrs. Glassington herself was not without her trepidation, and, like her niece, was glad to sit down, and look around her.

In the meanwhile, the other four ladies of the party (for Mrs. Petman on this occasion stuck to Miss Chatterer) had advanced to the upper end of the room, where they faced about, and where, in a few minutes, they had a circle around them, chiefly composed of men, whose eyes examined the prominent charms of the young ladies with as much earnestness, and as much wonder, as if they had never seen such things before. The matter was, they had never seen any thing of the sort put forward, as if to auction, in this way, and, to do the young ladies justice, they bore the scrutiny without flinching, and with all the composure of perfect innocence.

There was a young gentleman in the

crowd who had often admired the face and figure of Miss Rebecca, when he met her walking, and hearing a person near him say that she beat her sister by a full inch, he pressed forward to see what was the matter. He was a very tall young man, exceedingly short sighted, and always wore spectacles; and, as even with his utmost endeavours he could not get near enough to distinguish the object of such general interest, he asked a friend what was the matter?

"'Pon my soul, I can hardly tell," answered Sir Thistleton Hockham, "for I detest to inquire about the savages! but, I fancy, by the glance I got, that some of the females are putting up their beauties to auction. Pshaw! how intolerable the heat is becoming! it will be morally impossible to bear the dancing! how people press! as if we did not see naked necks and backs enough! I declare, the frequency of the sight has quite put me out of conceit with *veal!* I

cannot now eat veal of any kind, or part! I tried to-day at dinner, but the thought of the women crossed me, and had the same effect on my stomach, as a few grains of emetic tartar would! Pshaw!"

By the time Sir Thistleton had finished his speech, his friend, Mr. Snuffmore, had advanced nearer to the nudities, and being often, from the state of his eyes, debarred the gratification of seeing what his neighbours had rather too much of, he now viewed the Miss Chatterers with great eagerness, and some surprise, and, in addition to his spectacles, he used his quizzing glass, too.

At first, Mr. Snuffmore did not recollect the face of Miss Rebecca, which is a circumstance not much to be wondered at, considering that though he had often met her, he had seen her, very near, only two or three times in the library: he could not, then, quite suppress his astonishment at the vastness of her charms, but uttered "Oh dear!" in a sort of under tone. As

he said this, he stepped forward in order to ask her to dance, and unfortunately, in so doing, put his foot on the gouty toe of a ponderous divine, who, doubtless in order to moralize on the subject, had taken his station exactly opposite Miss Rebecca, and fixed a pair of what some malicious people would have called gloating eyes on the two worlds of bliss, she had so generously displayed. The heel of Mr. Snuffmore disturbed his speculations, let them be what they might, and, such are the sudden transitions in mundane affairs! called his attention from the contemplation of heavenly things, to his own toe: he uttered an exclamation, which, had he been such a person as Mr. Tilt, or Mr. Blood, immortalized in the entertaining history of Hardenbrass and Haverill, we should have recorded, seeing it would then have been in character. He, on the contrary, being a grave, respectable, pious divine, and a decided enemy to all profane swearing, and, indeed, every other

kind of profanity! and, above all, to loose, and wanton thoughts, expressions, or sights, we shall withhold what would appear uncharacteristic and forced, and what was, in fact, produced by a sudden transition from exquisite pleasure to exquisite pain. Luckily, too, for this respectable man, the fiddles at the moment struck up, and thus he was saved from the necessity of blushing, at having been betrayed into an improper use of speech. Unmindful of him or his sufferings, Mr. Snuffmore pursued his object; and was, on his proper introduction to the lady, and his subsequent request, told, that she should be very happy, but it must be the fourth or fifth set, she believed, as she was already four deep! She then consulted the sticks of her fan, each of which bore the name of a partner, and giving her hand to the gentleman who had first engaged her, and who was in waiting, she took her place in the

dance. Sir Thistleton Hockham now seized the arm of his friend Snuffmore, and said, "I see la belle sauvage is not thine this set, Snuffy! If you don't care for that beastly exercise of dancing English country dances, the most barbarous of all barbarous horrors, let us stand behind, and watch the movements of these new planets! I have twenty guineas on Charlotte, and old Blowfield bets on the other."

"What, which will dance best?" asked Snuffmore. His companion smiled scornfully, and answered, "Dance? no; which will carry her ware the steadiest: I bet on Charlotte, and I shall win! Ecod! we are under infinite obligations to these free-spirited girls, who give us a new pleasure in giving us a new kind of sport! fifty years ago, the clods would never have thought of any thing but problems, or some nonsense, on the *globes!* we use the terrestrial and celestial, in a more refined way! Ah! there they

go! If you could see, I would take you for a judge, but we have three appointed, and the majority will decide."

"I wish to God I could see," answered Snuffmore, "but my eyes are worse than ever. Ah! there they go! What an age it will be to my turn!" "By that time," returned Sir Thistleton, "the zone of lace that now makes believe to conceal the lower hemisphere, will be burst, and you will have *all* for nothing."

And now Colonel Blowfield came up, and said, "Hark ye, Thistleton! I heard a monstrous good thing, just now."

"From what good speaker?" asked Thistleton. "Oh! from Doctor Chinn!" answered the other. "He said he fancied our two fillies had run off with the golden balls from two pawnbroker's shops, and that they hung them out to invite customers." This, as well as the preceding conversation, was uttered in a sort of whisper, and followed by a loud

laugh: the speakers certainly imagining that nobody could overhear their communication, or they would have made it in a still lower voice. They were, however, mistaken; for the ladies in the vicinity hid their faces behind their fans, and peeped at their own necks, to see how much was visible, while the gentlemen joined in the mirth of the sporting party.

Among those, who were unfortunate enough to catch some of the information conveyed by Sir Thistleton Hockham and his friends, were Mrs. Glassington, and the blushing Mabella; the latter congratulating herself a hundred times that she had unpinned the corners, and the former not sorry that she had given her niece permission to do so. They were both glad that they had not been noticed, as of Miss Chatterer's party, for their native sense of propriety taught them, that after the sort of observation and animadversion the young ladies had drawn upon themselves, even rank and

fashion would not render them respectable. Two or three gentlemen, who, from residing in the house, were acquainted with Mabella, had asked her to dance, but she excused herself, on the plea of being afraid to overheat herself. Mrs. Glassington was not pleased at this, for she hoped to dance herself, and, unless Mabella danced, she could not leave her; she was in the midst of an expostulation on this head to Mabella, who only answered, that now she saw so many people, she dared not dance, sure that, never having learnt, she must appear awkward, when Sir Thistleton and his friends, turning round, first perceived her. Without recollecting that the fair object of their inquiries could see and hear them, they all stared at her, and old Colonel Blowfield, laying his hand on the arm of his friend, the Reverend Doctor Chinn, cried, "D——n me, Chinn, who's that?"

"Rot me, if I know! but, from her

manner, I should call her blushing Bell with downcast eyes! ha! ha! ha!" answered the Doctor, laughing heartily at his own wit. While this passed, Mr. Snuffmore put up his glass, and craned out his head and neck, in order to see Mabella the better, and Sir Thistleton, who had somewhat better breeding than the old Colonel (a man remarkable chiefly for libertinism, impudence and ignorance), only dropped his lower jaw, as if the great enemy Death had struck him, supported his chin with a finger and thumb, and, contemplating her stedfastly, twirled his watch-chain with his vacant hand.

Just at this moment, Miss Chatterer, senior, and Mrs. Petman came up, accompanied by a young officer, whose pinched waist and long unmanageable limbs, with a head moving like a ball on a wire, gave him no small resemblance to a father-long-legs; and the former lady,

presenting him to Mabella, cried, in a voice not much lower than thunder, "Miss Normanburn, give me leave to introduce the Honourable Captain Gander! Captain Gander, Miss Normanburn." Mabella, who had not dared to raise her eyes, made a timid curtsey, while Captain Gander performed a movement he intended for a bow, and said, in a voice that might be termed *falsetto*, for it was any thing but his natural one, and with a most agreeable stutter, "May I have the ho—ho—ho—ho—honour to da—da—da—da—dance with you M——Madam?"

"I beg to be excused, Sir!" answered Mabella, in a voice almost inarticulate from timidity, and an irresistible tickling in her throat, produced by hearing Captain Gander. This gentleman did not quite understand her, and he said, "Di—di—did you say, you was enga-ga-ga—"

"No, Sir," answered Mabella hastily,

and trying to suppress her inclination to laugh, "I am not engaged, but I do not dance at all! I beg to be excused."

It seemed to Mabella, that to this declaration the Captain was not inclined to answer, and she ventured to raise her eyes to see what he looked like, when she perceived him struggling, till he was nearly black in the face, with some word that, in spite of all his efforts, would remain in his throat: the face, the figure, the attitude, the gurgling in the throat were altogether more than Mabella could bear, and, unable to command her feelings, she burst into a hearty fit of laughter, in which she was accompanied by the four gentlemen we before mentioned, and several other individuals in the neighbourhood.

Miss Chatterer and Mrs. Petman had turned round to speak to a lady, and Mrs. Glassington was looking at a gentleman who danced with Miss Charlotte; but the laugh fixed their attention on Ma-

bella, and she had just covered her face with her pocket handkerchief, when Captain Gander, finding utterance for his rage, cried, in a very natural key, " D—n you, Miss! what do you mean by that?"

Before Mabella could answer, if she had intended it, the women all uttered a tremendous scream, the music suddenly stopped, the dancers rushed forward, and the Captain equally astonished with the poor trembling girl he had so surprised, moved his arms backward and forward, and seemed as if he would turn his head ten ways at once, but word he uttered none. Mabella almost sunk from the shock of being thus made the object of general notice, and the consciousness of having broken through the rules of politeness; but, happily for her, the din occasioned by every body talking at once, and many asking at once, "Who's hurt? what's the matter? who has fainted?" prevented any one from learning the truth, and the Captain being by the pres-

sure removed farther from her, she found she was by no means the principal object of attention. She prevailed on her aunt, then, to sit still, and Sir Thistleton Hockham politely stood by her, and prevented the standers, or rather movers by, from treading on her feet, by interposing his own person.

Captain Gander's gesticulations were so violent, and so ludicrous, and the words he uttered so incoherent, that he attracted all eyes, and drew the company about him, and after him; those who were nearest begging to know what had offended him, and those at a distance supposing half a hundred improbable things. As he was not, however, in himself an object of peculiar interest, the dancing was again resumed, and Miss Chatterer, senior, and Mrs. Petman endeavoured to prevail on the Captain to be quiet, and assured him that if, as it would seem from his expressions, any thing unpleasant had passed between him and Miss Norman-

burn, they would instantly interpose, and adjust affairs to his satisfaction.

In reply to these kind offers, the Captain stammered forth a determination not to speak any more, or take any further notice of a mere country girl, who had had the inconceivable rudeness to laugh in his face. He no sooner concluded his laborious sentence, than Snuffinore, who was looking at him through his quizzing glass, cried out, "Ma foi! was that all!" an exclamation that threw, not only Miss Chatterer, but many others into a violent fit of laughter. This enraged Gander, who had begun to cool, and he turned with a menacing air to the purblind young man, who had directed his view another way; but Mrs. Petman, moved no doubt by her humanity, threw her arms around his slender waist, and vowed he should not hazard his precious life. It was in vain that he tried to shake her off! she adhered to him with becoming tenderness, and Miss Chatterer,

who began to feel that the company would not spare either Mrs. Petman or her companions, finding a door open that led to a card'room, fairly pushed the pertinacious widow, and the blustering Captain into the apartment, and shut the door upon them. She then went in search of Mabella and her aunt, and found them sitting where she had left them, with Sir Thistleton standing guard, and the Colonel and Doctor Chinn at no great distance, eyeing her in a way that would have been very distressing, if she had observed it.

"What the deuce have you done to the Honourable Gander, Mabella?" cried Miss Chatterer: "he says you laughed at him! is it true, child?"

"I certainly did laugh," answered Mabella, "but, indeed, Ma'am, I could not help it, and I am sorry if the gentleman was offended at me!"

"Laugh! what, laugh at an honourable with an estate of seven thousand a year,

child!" cried Miss Chatterer; "I did not think you'd been so ill bred! you may depend upon it, Miss, that he is the last young man of fashion I shall trouble myself to introduce to you! I know his family intimately, and I would rather have given fifty guineas than have had any Gander affronted through my means. You don't deserve a partner!"

"I do not wish for one, Madam!" said Mabella, raising her hitherto cast down eyes; "I had refused to dance more than once, and I must beg that you will not send me any more *Ganders!*"

When Mabella spoke there was a smile on the faces of all within hearing, and Miss Chatterer, who perceived it, was so angry, that she turned round and walked off to meet a party now entering the room.

She was no sooner gone, than Mrs. Glassington began a lecture to poor Mabella on the rudeness and folly of her behaviour, and this with so little delicacy,

that it was impossible for Sir Thistleton Hockham to avoid hearing it, or the gentle entreaties of her niece to defer it till they reached their own room: he felt very sorry (for he was a good natured man) to see the young lady so annoyed, and he thought he would make a diversion in her favour.

END OF VOL. II.

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